

## The Strange War in the Gulf



**Chronicle of the War** Dillip Hiro • **Checkmate** Ghassan Salameh  
**Not Quite Armageddon** Marion Farouk-Sluglett and Peter Sluglett  
**The War and the Islamic Republic** Eric Hooglund  
**US Ready to Intervene** Joe Stork and Martha Wenger  
**Commanding the Center** Daniel Volman  
**Documents and Reviews**

**Orientalist Painting** Sarah Graham-Brown

# Middle East Research & Information Project

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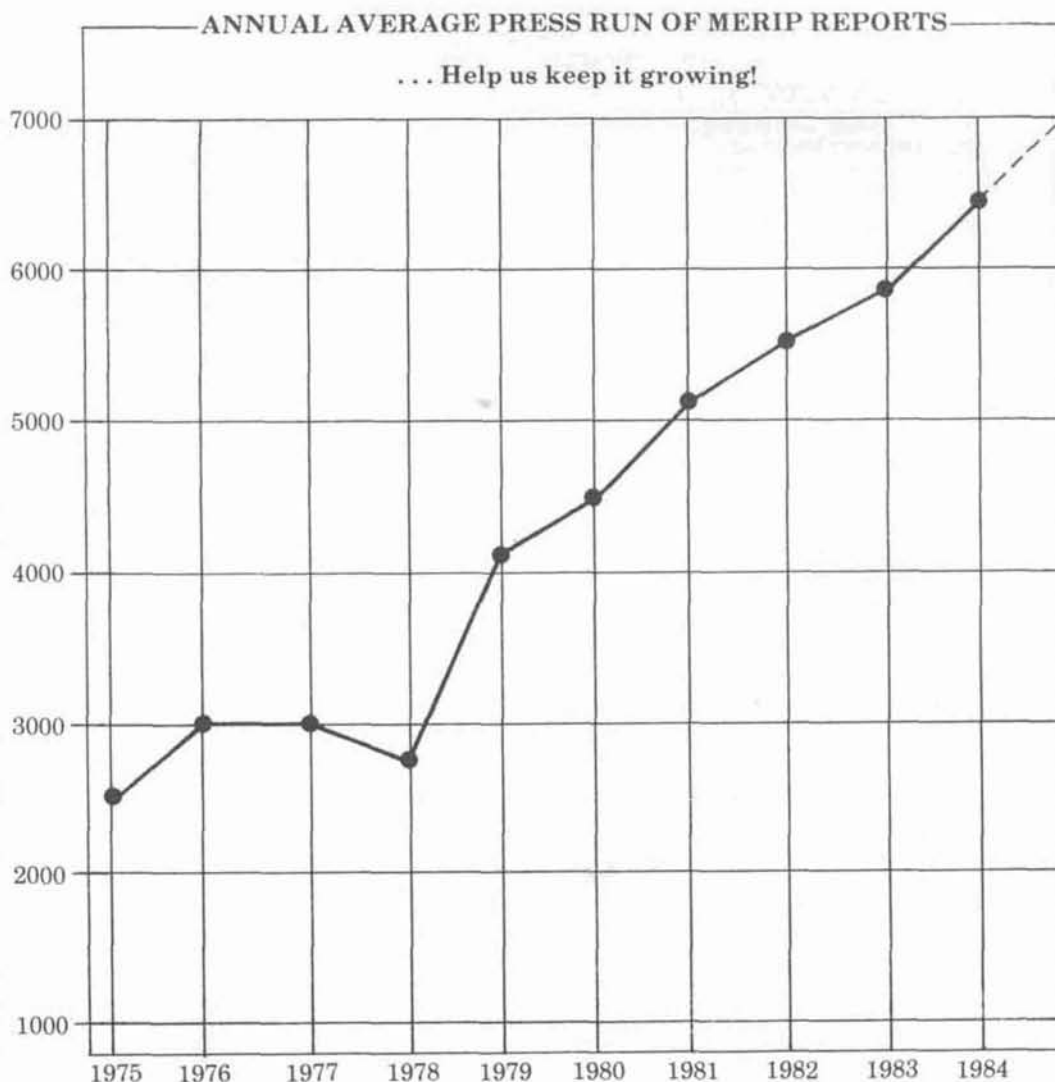
## From the Editors:

In the middle of July, MERIP mailed out a fund-raising appeal to all subscribers. This is the most urgent and important appeal we have ever made to our readers. All organizations like ours rely on financial help from their readers and supporters. In MERIP's case, this reliance is especially crucial. We do not seek or accept funds from any government or political organization. Foundations and philanthropists will not support MERIP for fear of being identified as pro-Palestinian. MERIP is working towards becoming financially self-sufficient through increased circulation of the magazine, and the chart on this page demonstrates the considerable success we've had. But we still have a ways to go. We desperately need funds to cover our annual deficit, to promote continued growth and to eliminate our debt from previous years.

We must raise at least \$20,000 in the next few weeks to insure that our work can continue. The initial responses to the appeal are encouraging, but we are still far from our goal. Our opportunities to reach more people have never been greater, yet MERIP cannot go on unless we can pay off overdue bills from our printer, typesetter and other suppliers. We need to hear from many, many more readers and the time is getting short.

We especially need Sustainers, who contribute \$100 or more, and Associates, who contribute \$50 or more. These are critical gifts, and we hope that our Sustainer and Associate ranks will grow more than ever this year. Please, if you possibly can, consider giving MERIP a gift in this range. If such a contribution is beyond your means, please send a smaller donation. Every dollar counts, and it is encouraging to hear from as many readers as possible.

There are many necessary tasks and exciting opportunities for MERIP's work in the months ahead. Please help us meet them with the resources we vitally need. We are counting on your support. We hope that readers who have bought this issue on a newsstand will also respond to this appeal, by sending a check to: **MERIP Appeal, PO Box 43445, Washington DC 20010.**







Fleeing a city in southwestern Iran in the early part of the war.

Kaveh Golestan

# Chronicle of the Gulf War

Dilip Hiro

**T**he war between Iran and Iraq is approaching its fourth anniversary. In its duration, large numbers of casualties and physical damage, this war already ranks as one of the most serious armed conflicts since World War II. Several Iranian cities and numerous towns have been destroyed, and the city of Basra, Iraq's second largest, has been under serious threat for a year or more. Both countries have extensive industrial and oil exporting facilities in the war zone which have been heavily damaged in the fighting. Economic losses in both countries are calculated in many tens of billions of dollars. Iran claimed in May 1983 that it had suffered \$90 billion in economic damages.<sup>1</sup> Iraq has not provided any comparable estimate; Deputy Oil Minister 'Abd al-Moneim Samirai said in early 1982 that it would take five years to restore Iraq's hydrocarbon industry to its pre-war efficiency.<sup>2</sup>

The human costs have been enormous. US military analysts estimated that by mid-February 1984—before the latest phase of shellings and offensives—Iraq had suffered 180,000 killed and Iraq 65,000; Iran's wounded were esti-

mated at 540,000 and Iraq's at 165,000.\*<sup>3</sup> According to the International Committee of the Red Cross in May 1983, Iran reported holding 45 to 50,000 Iraqi POWs, while Iraq had registered some 6,800 Iranian POWs.<sup>4</sup> In terms of the damage inflicted and the hatreds engendered, the war—no matter what its immediate outcome—has probably defined an era of intense protracted conflict which will last for many years.

Despite its intensity and duration, though, this war has been strangely limited. In the opening weeks of the war, and again recently, both countries' air forces have taken part, but this has largely been a land war. Large numbers of troops and artillery have been involved in major offensives but produced only small movements of the front lines. The war has raged along almost every part of the 730-mile border between the two countries, but most of the national territory of both states, including Tehran and Baghdad, has remained outside the war zone. The war's regional impact had been quite limited until Iraq initiated the latest "tanker war" phase in mid-April. Even then, the world oil market has experienced no crisis of supply or price. Finally, the spectre of superpower confrontation in the war has remained fairly remote. The recent escalation may force a truce and a negotiated settlement, as Iraq hopes. It seems

\*These are obviously very crude estimates which tend to overstate Iran's losses and understate Iraq's. Other estimates of Iraqi deaths are as high as 100,000, and the true figure is probably around 75-80,000. Iranian wounded are calculated by a "battlefield rule-of-thumb" of three wounded for every fatality. For Iraq, the ratio used is inexplicably lower.

likely, though, that the conflict will remain stalemated, with both armies dug in along most of their border for many months to come.

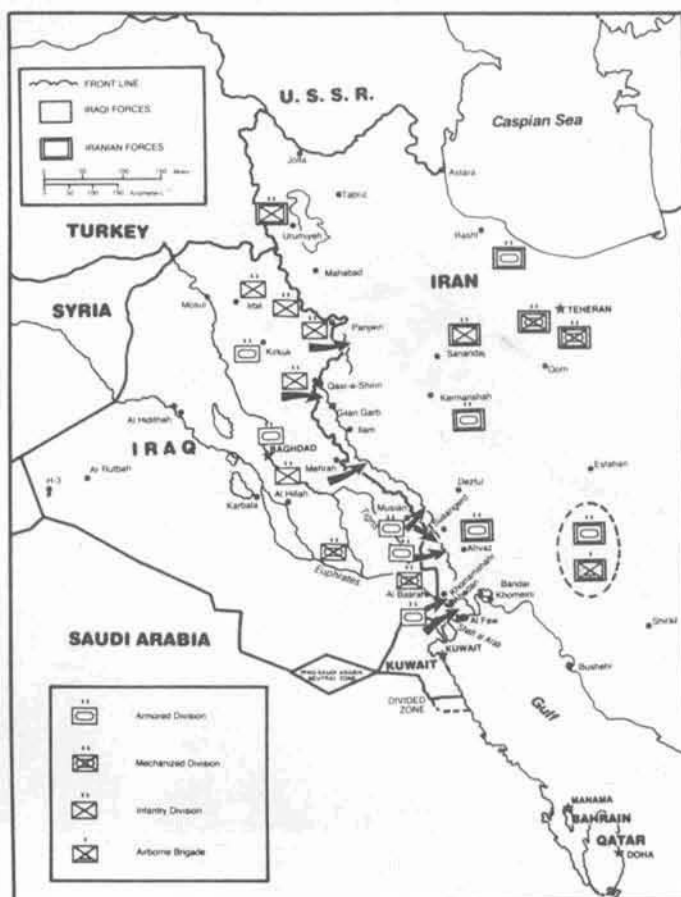
## Backdrop to the War

Relations between Iran and Iraq have frequently been hostile. In the modern period, the territory that became the independent state of Iraq had been part of the Ottoman Empire, and as such had a degree of leverage over Iran, then known as Persia. This relationship continued after World War I, when Britain assumed formal political control over the new Iraqi state. In the 1930s, clashes along their disputed borders and the Shatt al-Arab waterway led to a treaty in 1937 which allocated the entire Shatt al-Arab to Iraqi sovereignty except for small anchorage areas at the Iranian ports of Abadan and Khorramshahr. The treaty was in line with earlier agreements of 1847 and 1913-14, and reflected the political weight of Britain as Iraq's sponsoring power. The next two decades were relatively peaceful, although Iraq was predictably aligned with Britain in the crisis over Iranian nationalization of British oil interests under Mohammed Mossadeq, the crisis which restored the shah to power in August 1953. (In fact, the Iraqi battle plan of September 1980 was reportedly based on a British military contingency plan drawn up in 1950 which mapped out an Iraqi military occupation of Iran's oil-rich Khuzistan province.<sup>5</sup>) These decades of relative tranquility ended when Iraq's British-sponsored monarchy was toppled by Iraqi army officers in July 1958. Iran had regarded the 1937 treaty as an imposition of British hegemony, and in November 1959 the shah demanded that the river border be moved from the Iranian shore to the middle of the Shatt al-Arab channel. Iranian ships stopped using Iraqi pilots or paying Iraqi tolls. Iraq's 'Abd ul-Karim Qassem responded the next month by also declaring the 1937 treaty void, claiming the waters around Abadan and Khorramshahr for Iraq. But Baghdad lacked the military strength to challenge Tehran.

Hostilities between the two countries came to the fore again after the Ba'th Party took power in Baghdad in July 1968. Border clashes erupted in March 1969. In April, Iraq insisted that Iranian ships resume toll payments. Iran refused, Iranian vessels entered the Shatt al-Arab under Iranian naval escort, and the shah abrogated the 1937 treaty.

The border conflict was symptomatic of deeper problems between the two regimes, and in many respects the shifting location of the river boundary simply expressed changes in the overall balance of forces between the two countries. Throughout the 1960s and into the 1970s, Baghdad had been engaged in a prolonged struggle with the major Western oil companies over control of Iraq's reserves and production. Iran's relations with these same companies were quite warm. Politically and militarily, Iran was closely aligned with the United States, while Iraq found support from the Soviet Union. After 1968-69, the shah's regime made great efforts to destabilize the Ba'th in Baghdad by actively supporting Kurdish secessionists led by Mustafa Barzani. This campaign was carried out in very close collaboration with both the United States and

## Initial Iraqi Attacks



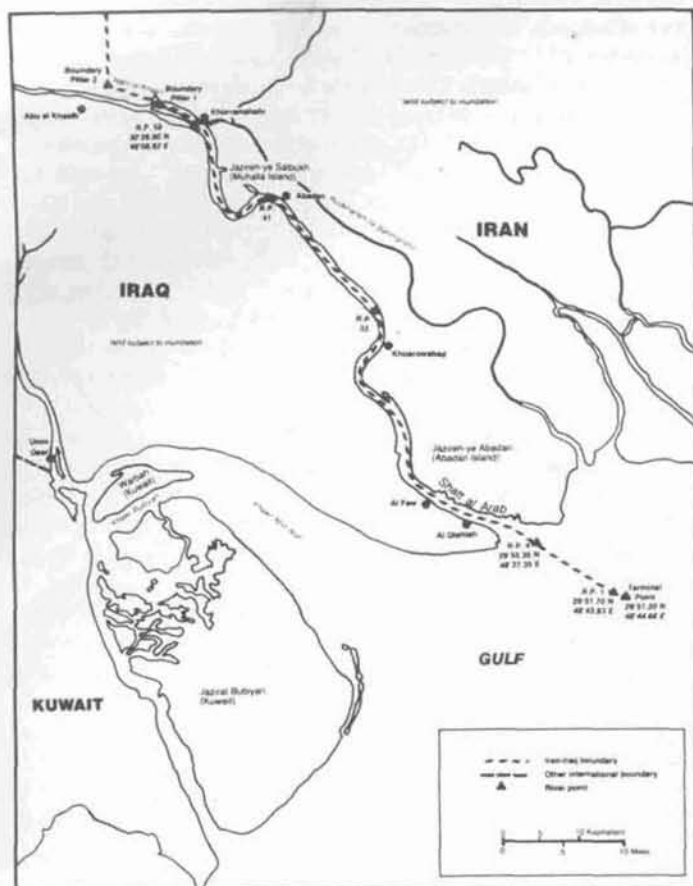
Source: Col. W.O. Staudenmaier, US Army Strategic Studies Institute.

Israel. Iraq in turn supported secessionist elements among Iran's Arab, Kurdish and Baluch minorities, but these annoyances did not compare with the threat posed to Ba'thi rule by the Kurdish insurgency. Much of Iraq's armed forces were tied down in the Kurdish campaign, and President Saddam Hussein has since claimed that the Iraqi army suffered 16,000 casualties in what amounted to an undeclared war between the two countries fought out largely through Kurdish forces.

By late 1974, this war had escalated to the brink of direct clashes between Iraqi and Iranian military forces. This threat prompted mediation efforts, first by Turkey and then Algeria. On March 6, 1975, Saddam Hussein (then vice-president of Iraq) met with the shah during an OPEC summit conference in Algiers. Their agreement called for an end to "all acts of infiltration of a subversive character." In return for Iran's restraint on this score, Iraq agreed to Iran's long-standing demand that the Shatt al-Arab border be set at the *thalweg*, or mid-channel.\* A Treaty of International Boundaries and Good Neighborliness was signed in Baghdad on June 13, 1975, and the treaty was ratified in September. At one level, the war that erupted in September 1980 was an act of Iraqi retribution for Iran's imposition of the 1975 treaty. "We would not have agreed if we'd had the choice," Iraqi Defense Minister

\*This is the norm for international borders involving rivers.

## The Shatt al-Arab



Source: Central Intelligence Agency.

Adnan Khairallah stated on September 25, 1980.

Iran's support for the Kurdish insurgency points to another major factor in the history of hostile relations between these two nation states: namely, the interlocking of communities. Kurds make up about six percent of Iran's population and about 20 percent of Iraq's. Iraq has long claimed to represent the ethnically Arab population of southern Iran's Khuzistan province. The most potent instance of this interlocking of communities emerged after the Iranian revolution—the responsibility which the Islamic Republic assumed for the 55 percent of the Iraqi population which is Shi'i. At another level, then, the cause of this four-year-old war was the Iranian revolution itself, for it introduced into this already tense equation a new and dynamic element, Islamic universalism versus Iraqi nationalism. Both regimes felt that the adversary was supporting their domestic opponents, and both were drawn into the conflict as a result of their domestic divisions and unstable political bases.

In fact, there is no evidence to suggest that the Iraqi government was in any danger of being overthrown in the period after the Iranian revolution. But Saddam Hussein, who took full and formal power as president of Iraq in July 1979, believed strongly that his tenure required him to move fast and hard against any threats of opposition. The fate of his neighbor the shah could only have reinforced this inclination. In June of 1979, when Iraqi Shi'is protested the house arrest of their spiritual leader, Ayatollah

Mohammed Bakr al-Sadr, the government dispersed them with military force, killing scores and arresting some 3,000. Hussein insisted that the leading members of the Shi'i opposition organization, al-Da'wah al-Islamiyyah (The Islamic Call), be executed. This was reportedly one factor in the resignation of President Ahmed Hassan al-Bakr and the accession of Saddam Hussein. In March 1980, the Iraqi government executed around 100 Shi'i activists, many of them members of al-Da'wah.\*

Tensions between Baghdad and Tehran increased dramatically, and each government asked the ambassador of the other to leave. On April 1, a hand-grenade attack at Baghdad's Mustansariyya University wounded Deputy Prime Minister Tariq Aziz and killed two students. An Iraqi of Iranian descent was seized and accused of the crime. On April 5, at a funeral procession for the students killed a few days earlier, a bomb killed another student. Over the next week clashes erupted along the border, more diplomats were expelled, and Iraq raised the demand that Iran withdraw from the three small Persian Gulf islands which the shah had seized in 1970. In Tehran, leading spokesmen of the Islamic Republic, including President Abol-Hassan Bani-Sadr, Foreign Minister Sadegh Ghotbzadeh and Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini, asserted that the Iraqi regime would be, in the Ayatollah's words, "dispatched to the refuse bin of history." Iraq deported more than 15,000 Iraqi citizens of Iranian origin to Iran. Sometime in this month, most probably on April 8 or 9, Baghdad secretly executed Ayatollah al-Sadr after he refused to reverse his condemnation of the regime as "unIslamic." On April 22, Khomeini declared three days of mourning for al-Sadr, and Tehran began training Iraqi Shi'is in guerrilla tactics. It seems most likely that Saddam Hussein made the final decision to go to war in April 1980.

In June, each government broke off diplomatic relations with the other. Tehran stepped up its propaganda attacks against Saddam Hussein, while Baghdad allowed two prominent Iranian exiles, Shapour Bakhtiar and General Gholam Ali Oveissi, each to operate their own separate radio stations from Iraqi territory. July saw the failure of a military coup attempt in Iran, masterminded by Bakhtiar. According to one account of this period, the Soviet Union, through the Tudeh Party, passed to Tehran Iraqi war plans which visualized capturing Khuzistan province in a week, linking up with the insurgents in Iranian Kurdistan, and declaring a "Free Republic of Iran" under Bakhtiar based in the southern city of Ahwaz.<sup>6</sup>

## The First Phase: Invasion

The war has so far passed through five fairly distinct phases. The first phase, the Iraqi offensive into Iran, began in September 1980 and had clearly ended by late March 1981. Saddam Hussein asserts that the war began on September 4 with Iranian attacks across the border near Qasr-i-Shirin, Nasrabad and Kalantari. On September 6, Iraq threatened to capture some 200 square kilometers of

\*Al-Da'wah claims that some 500 of its cadre and sympathizers were executed between 1974 and 1980, and another 600 since September 1980. For the latter, see *Washington Post*, March 20, 1984.



territory around Musian (which Iraq claimed under the 1975 Algiers agreement). On September 10, Baghdad claimed it had seized this territory. Border clashes continued over the following week, and on September 17 Saddam Hussein formally abrogated the 1975 treaty, declaring that Iran had refused to abide by it and that the Shatt al-Arab river was "totally Iraqi and totally Arab." When Iran refused Iraqi demands that its ships take on Iraqi pilots, heavy fighting broke out along the waterway. On September 22, Iraqi warplanes bombed 10 Iranian airfields and the next day approximately a third of Iraq's 200,000-man army moved across the border into Khuzistan. In the very first days of the war—on September 23 and 24—both sides launched air attacks against oil production and exporting facilities and other economic installations, forcing both countries to halt oil exports.\*

Certainly one of the calculations behind the Iraqi escalation and invasion of Khuzistan was the reported deterioration of the Iranian military under the impact of the revolution. Western sources estimated that some 140,000 military personnel had deserted in the course of the revolution, lowering the armed forces from 260,000 to 110,000.<sup>7</sup> Strains between the military command and the new revolutionary regime were considerable. Most important, in the Iraqi view, was that the hostage crisis had completely severed Iran from its superpower patron, the United States, cutting off the Iranian military from badly needed spare parts and logistical assistance. In addition, much of the armed forces were occupied by the Kurdish insurgents, or stationed along the Soviet border. The Iraqis faced little opposition from the regular Iranian military as they slowly advanced into Khuzistan behind heavy artillery. Iraqi strategy, designed to keep its own casualties to a minimum, called for surrounding and besieging the major cities in Khuzistan—Abadan, Ahwaz, Khorramshahr and Dizful. One month later, Iraq was finally able to announce the capture of Khorramshahr after close, intense house-to-house fighting with the Revolutionary Guards who comprised the major Iranian defense force in the province. Sieges continued against the other cities, but they were never taken. Western analysts subsequently faulted the Iraqi high command for not moving swiftly to take Dizful, the major economic and communications link of Khuzistan with Tehran and the rest of the country.<sup>8</sup>

Another factor was the extent to which Baghdad misjudged the support it could expect from Khuzistan's Arab population. The invasion aroused no significant support for Iraq among this target group. By the end of two months, Iraq had captured about a third of Khuzistan province, but only Khorramshahr among the major cities. The major fighting over the next several months was for control of Abadan. Iranian officials claimed the invasion had created 1.5 million refugees. In late December, Iraq opened a second front in the northern Kurdistan area but apparently made no major gains there. On the Iranian side, an offensive commenced on January 5, but this achieved little. By Feb-

ruary, it appeared that neither side was able to achieve a decisive military breakthrough, raising outside hopes that the situation was conducive to negotiations through the auspices of the United Nations, the Non-Aligned Movement or the Islamic Conference Organization (ICO).

According to the Iraqi government, its war aims were limited to the "recovery" of "complete rights to the Shatt al-Arab and other usurped Iraqi territories," an end to Iranian interference in Iraq's internal affairs and the return of the three small Gulf islands to the United Arab Emirates. On the one hand, Baghdad professed no interest in keeping any Iranian territory. On the other hand, Deputy Prime Minister Taha Yasin Ramadan declared on October 21, 1980, that Iraq would "continue to clean up the region and take the cities of Arabistan," and that "Arabistan oil will remain Iraqi as long as Tehran will not negotiate."<sup>9</sup>

Tehran made clear on numerous occasions that it would not consider a ceasefire until Iraqi troops had completely withdrawn from Iranian territory. These irreconcilable positions frustrated UN special mediator Olof Palme, who visited both capitals in mid-February 1981. An ICO team visited both capitals in early March and proposed a ceasefire followed by an immediate Iraqi withdrawal. The Iranian Supreme Defense Council rejected this unanimously, while Iraq indicated interest in the proposal. Khomeini thus used the ICO to test Iraqi resolve to continue the war. Baghdad's eagerness for negotiations encouraged the Iranian leadership to fight on. Saddam Hussein recognized the trap he had stepped into, and tried to reverse the situation with a determined effort to capture the city of Susangard on March 19-20. The failure of this offensive marked the end of the first phase of the war.

The events of March 1981 also marked a significant escalation in the declared war aims of both sides. Saddam Hussein declared Iraqi readiness to aid Iranian minorities to "achieve their national rights" and establish relations with Iraq, and later pledged "full support for all nationalities and national movements" attempting to overthrow the Khomeini regime. Tariq Aziz declared in mid-April that "we have reached a point where objectives have changed," and that "now we don't care if Iran is dismembered."<sup>10</sup> On the Iranian side, Speaker of the Majlis Ali Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani asserted that "removal of Saddam's regime" was "our strategic goal on which we will not compromise."

This first phase of the war also produced a relatively stable pattern of regional and international alliances behind the contending parties. On the Arab side, only King Hussein of Jordan declared open and unambiguous support for Iraq's war initiative. Support from the Arabian Peninsula states was more circumspect publicly but also more significant materially. As the war dragged on, they provided Baghdad an estimated billion dollars a month over the first two years. Kuwait, in addition to financial support, also provided a crucial transshipment point for Iraqi imports once the Shatt al-Arab was closed by the fighting. Several Iranian air attacks on Kuwaiti targets in November 1980, June 1981 and October 1981 posed the danger of a wider war, but until the spring of 1984 actual fighting remained confined to Iranian and Iraqi territory. Iran, for its part, enlisted the support of Syria and Libya early on. Outside the Arab world, Turkey's new military junta maintained a careful neutrality and profitable trade

\*There is no basis for the assertion that Iran "started" the attacks against oil installations (see for example *Middle East International*, June 1, 1984). Eventually Iraq was able to resume limited exports via the pipelines through Turkey and Syria, and Iran was able to resume exports through Kharg Island. Iraqi attacks against Kharg Island continued throughout the war, and Iran's ability to continue exporting was not due to any Iraqi restraint in this regard.





Fighting near Khorramshahr.

Mohsen Shandiz

with both states. Israel covertly supported Iran by selling badly needed spare parts for US-supplied weapons and aircraft through third parties.

The Israelis asserted that their support for Iran was coordinated with the US, which Washington denied. Once the war broke out, the US adopted a stance of official neutrality, while using the crisis to build up its military forces in the region. Whatever unofficial encouragement Washington might have given Baghdad to attack Iran, it declared its opposition to any effort to force the collapse of the Iranian nation-state. Washington already had a full embargo on military shipments to Iran, thanks to the hostage crisis, and after the war broke out it cancelled several standing Iraqi orders for items such as gas turbines with potential military application. The Soviet Union, which had been the source of some 85 percent of Iraq's military imports, opposed the invasion and halted military shipments. Deprived of military supplies from its major source, Iraq turned to Egypt and other friendly countries with Soviet-supplied military inventories for assistance.

## The Second Phase: Stalemate

Iraq continued to hold about 14,000 square kilometers of Iranian territory, mostly in Khuzistan, but was unable to press its offensive any further. Iran had managed to re-

mobilize its regular forces; together with the irregular Revolutionary Guards, Iran was now able to prevent further Iraqi advances but unable to break the sieges against Ahwaz, Dizful and, especially, Abadan. On April 4 the Iranian air force did manage to strike deep into Iraqi territory and destroy 46 warplanes at the al-Walid airbase.<sup>11</sup> (Iraq later claimed that Syria had provided air cover for the Iranian attack.) For Iran, this year was one of political turmoil and economic difficulty. President Bani-Sadr was forced out of office and into exile; the government brutally suppressed the Mujahidin and other opposition forces. These developments paved the way for political consolidation of the regime and especially for cooperation between the army, the Revolutionary Guards and the paramilitary Basij volunteer force established in late 1979.\* The poor state of the economy led Iran to spur its oil exports by offering discounts off the mandated OPEC price, and by the spring of 1982 it was again exporting nearly a million and a half barrels per day. This was probably an important asset for those in the leadership arguing for a massive, multipronged offensive against the Iraqi occupation forces.

Iraq, for its part, continued its "guns and butter" approach of isolating its citizens from the indirect econom-

\*The Basij is an auxiliary, irregular short-term volunteer force which does not have the military training or structure of the Revolutionary Guards, for instance. They now come under the authority of the Revolutionary Guards.

ic consequences of the war by drawing down its reserves and continuing to receive impressive subsidies from Saudi Arabia and other neighbors with a stake in the outcome of the war. Oil exports via pipelines through Syria and Turkey continued to provide some foreign exchange. As this period of stalemate continued, though, Iraq faced the need to shift to a program of austerity. On the battlefield, too, the tide began to turn against the Iraqis. In late September 1981, Iranian forces partially broke the siege of Abadan by driving Iraqi troops back to the west of the Karun River. In early November, Saddam Hussein proposed a one month ceasefire to coincide with Ramadan; Iran rejected this. December 1981 saw further heavy fighting. Saddam Hussein, during a tour of the battlefield, reflected the course of these battles when he told his troops: "It is very important that you must not lose any more positions."<sup>12</sup>

Other signs that this year of stalemate might be coming to a close include renewed indications of support for Iraq from other Arab states. In early November 1981, Baghdad broadcast official congratulations to Egyptian volunteers participating in the war. Besides the accumulating signs of Iraqi reversals, the exposure of a conspiracy of pro-Iranian sympathizers in Bahrain to overthrow the al-Khalifa ruling family prompted declarations of concern among the Gulf rulers about the course of the war. In early February, the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) publicly stated the intent of its member countries to counter Iranian influence in the Gulf. US Secretary of Defense Caspar Weinberger, then in Riyadh, declared that US assistance in establishing a Gulf arms industry was "a very real possibility."

Early March of 1982, like the same period a year earlier, saw a number of failed efforts to initiate a ceasefire and negotiations. By the end of the month, it was apparent that the war had entered an entirely new phase.

### Phase Three: Iran Takes the Offensive

The Iranian new year, March 22, 1982, marked the start of this third phase of the war. The Iraqis had been expecting a new year's offensive against Khorramshahr. Instead, Iran sent some 200,000 troops, Revolutionary Guards and Basij militia against Iraqi lines to the north of Khorramshahr, in the Dizful-Shush region. Waves of approximately 1,000 combatants, each armed with shoulder-held rocket launchers, advanced at intervals of 200 to 500 yards, straining Iraqi ammunition supplies and eventually overpowering them. Both sides suffered heavy casualties. The Iranians destroyed one mechanized and two armored Iraqi divisions and captured between 14 and 15,000 Iraqi prisoners. Western journalists were then invited to the Iranian front for the first time, where they reported that Iraqi POWs showed few signs of combat stress or battle fatigue. "They didn't fight; they surrendered en masse," was the conclusion of one analyst.<sup>\*13</sup> Saddam Hussein, in a message to Iraqi troops, asked them "not to feel bitter over the rearrangement of the Iraqi defense lines." US intelli-

gence officials referred to the Iraqi army as "on the verge of collapse."<sup>14</sup>

Iraqi setbacks, meanwhile, were not limited to the battlefield. On April 8, Syria closed its borders with Iraq on the grounds that Iraq had been supporting the Syrian Muslim Brotherhood. On April 10, Damascus cut off the flow of Iraqi oil exports to the terminal at Banias.\* This reduced Iraqi oil exports to some 600,000 barrels per day through the Turkish pipeline, and cut some \$5 billion from Iraq's expected export earnings. On the next day, April 11, President Hussein announced the start of economic austerity.

Iraq's Arab allies also assumed a more visible profile. Some 15 to 17,000 Egyptians were serving in the Iraqi army, recruited from the hundreds of thousands of Egyptian workers then in Iraq by promises of high pay and war bonuses.<sup>15</sup> Egypt agreed in late March to sell Iraq \$1.5 billion worth of war materiel—small arms, ammunition and Egyptian-manufactured anti-tank rockets.<sup>16</sup> Jordan's King Hussein rushed to Iraq and reportedly offered to send about 20,000 men, or two divisions, to the front.<sup>17</sup> (Jordanian military "volunteers" were already guarding important Iraqi installations, freeing Iraqi troops for the front, and high-ranking Jordanian officers have apparently worked closely as advisors to the Iraqi high command. There are no indications that any regular Jordanian troops were ever sent to the front, although the King did encourage Jordanians to volunteer for a special "Yarmuk Brigade."<sup>18</sup> This appeal did not strike a popular chord, though, and it seems unlikely that the number of Jordanian forces serving in Iraq in any military capacity ever exceeded 5,000.) In May 1982, Baghdad denied rumors of regular Egyptian or Jordanian forces serving in Iraq, and acknowledged only the presence of volunteers from Jordan and North Yemen.<sup>19</sup> Deputy Prime Minister Ramadan said in early 1983 that the Popular Army which he heads includes 14,000 volunteers from "other Arab countries."<sup>20</sup> Those mentioned include, Morocco, Tunisia and Sudan, along with Egypt, Jordan and the YAR.

Saddam Hussein declared on April 12 that Iraq would withdraw from Iran if it had assurances this would end the war. The GCC states were reportedly considering a Gulf Reconstruction Fund which would serve as a mechanism for meeting Iranian demands for reparations. Iran's response was to resume its offensive on April 30. Within a week, Iran regained a 22-mile section of the border between Husseinliyya and Khorramshahr and prepared to retake the only major city which Iraq had managed to capture. The attack on Khorramshahr began on May 21, as 70,000 Iranians moved against the 35,000 Iraqi occupation troops there. On May 23, Saddam Hussein invoked the Arab League defense charter to secure military assistance, to no avail. On May 24, Khorramshahr fell to the Iranians; 12,000 Iraqi soldiers surrendered while the rest fled. On May 28, Iranian forces moved north to the central front to expel Iraqi troops from Iranian territory there. Iran's Speaker of the Majlis Rafsanjani declared that Iran had no

\*There is reason to believe that many of these POWs were from the so-called Popular Army, a mass militia, rather than the regular army.

\*The day before, on April 9, an Iranian tanker arrived at Banias with the first consignment of oil to cover the supplies which Syria had been drawing from the Iraqi pipeline. This Iranian supply of oil to Syria on very favorable credit terms was renewed this past spring by the Iranian *majlis*.

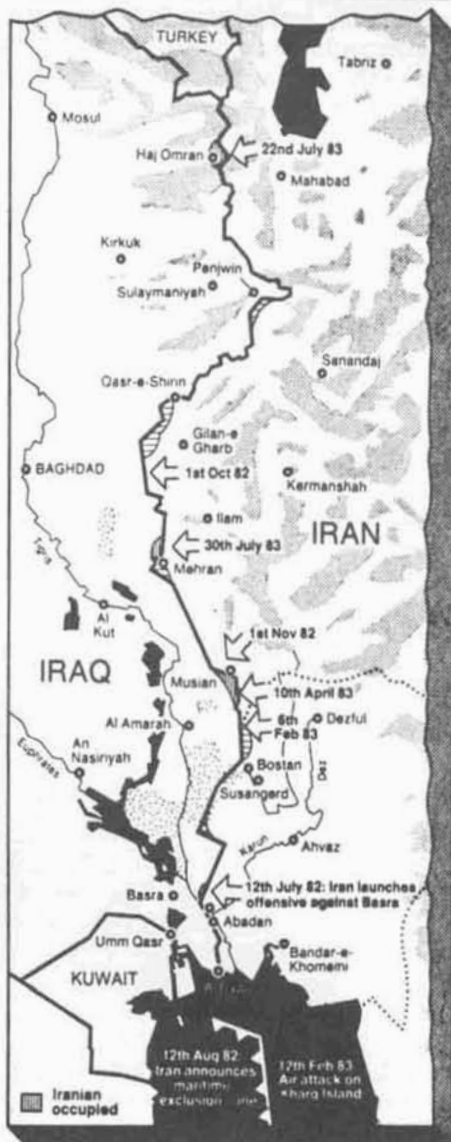
# IRAQI INVASION SEP 80 TO DEC 80



# IRANIAN COUNTER-OFFENSIVE SEP 81 TO MAY 82



# IRANIAN ADVANCES MAY 82 TO SEP 83



Source: *The Times* (London).

intention of interfering in the Gulf states, but that replacement of Saddam Hussein in Baghdad was a necessary condition for negotiations.

Syria and Saudi Arabia reportedly held consultations on a possible successor to Saddam Hussein, with Damascus favoring former president Hassan al-Bakr and the Saudis suggesting Shafiq Daraji, Iraq's ambassador in Riyadh.<sup>21</sup> On June 2, the GCC foreign ministers meeting in Riyadh offered a peace plan: a ceasefire, withdrawal to the 1975 treaty borders, and negotiations to resolve all outstanding issues. These efforts were soon blown off course by the Israeli invasion of Lebanon.\*

On June 10, as the Israeli army reached the outskirts of Beirut, Iraq's ruling Revolutionary Command Council declared its readiness for an immediate ceasefire and a verdict on which side started the war from the UN, the Non-Aligned Movement or the ICO. Iran spurned the offer. On June 20, Saddam Hussein unilaterally announced that Iraq would withdraw completely from Iran within 10 days. Rumors were then circulating in Baghdad that Saddam Hussein would soon be replaced by a triumvirate of Tariq Aziz, Taha Yassin Ramadan and Foreign Minister Sa'doun Hammadi. Khomeini may have concluded that Saddam Hussein's departure was imminent.

But on June 28 Saddam Hussein confounded his adversaries and critics by dismissing the entire Revolutionary Command Council and reappointing a smaller one, with himself still as chairman. He extended the purge to the cabinet and the senior officer corps. The former minister of health, Riyadh Ibrahim Hussein, was executed, reportedly for the crime of suggesting that Iraq's interests might be

\*The attempted assassination of Israeli ambassador Shlomo Argov in London was apparently masterminded by Nawwaf al-Rosan, a colonel in Iraqi intelligence, according to later court proceedings in London. One interpretation of the sequence of events is that Baghdad ordered the assassination to precipitate a major crisis such as the invasion of Lebanon and provide a rationale for Iraq to declare an immediate ceasefire in order that all parties might join a common front against Israel. See *The Guardian* (London) March 7, 1983.



better served if Saddam Hussein were to step aside in favor of former president al-Bakr.\* This elimination of potential opposition within the Ba'ath regime, coupled with the earlier ruthless suppression of al-Da'wah, left Khomeini with only one way to fulfill his goal of toppling Saddam. On July 9, Majlis speaker Rafsanjani reiterated Iran's demands: restoration of the 1975 treaty borders, repatriation of over 100,000 Iraqis expelled by Baghdad, \$100 billion in war reparations and acceptance of war guilt by Iraq. If these demands were not met, he added, Iran would carry the war into Iraq.

## Phase Four: The Assault Against Iraq

On July 12, Iran rejected a UN Security Council call for a ceasefire and withdrawal and on the next day deployed five divisions to capture Basra, Iraq's second largest city. The Iranians drove ten miles into Iraq, coming within seven miles of Basra. Iraqi defenses consisted of well-placed machine gun and artillery positions, minefields and barbed wire, manned by four divisions. Some 150,000 troops were locked in intense battles that raged for a week. The Iraqis, defending their own territory, blunted the Iranian thrust and even managed to push back Tehran's forces. A second Iranian offensive, on July 22, was likewise blocked. The fortnight's bloody fighting ended in a stalemate. Independent observers estimated Iranian battlefield casualties at 1,000 per day.\*\*

The major accomplishment of this offensive, from Iran's perspective, was that Saddam Hussein was forced to ask the Non-Aligned Movement to shift the venue of its upcoming summit from Baghdad to New Delhi, and thus to relinquish his three-year term as leader of the movement.

In September 1982, the Arab League summit in Fez, Morocco, proposed a ceasefire for the coming pilgrimage season, complete Iraqi withdrawal, and more than \$100 billion in compensation to Iran through an Islamic Reconstruction Fund. Iran rejected the proposals and launched four new offensives in late October-early November, three of them on the central front. Each gained small amounts of territory but failed to penetrate far into Iraq. The offensives resumed in February 1983 in the Musian area. The Iranians succeeded in pushing many miles into Iraq, but Iraq, using aircraft and helicopter gunships extensively for the first time in battlefield support missions, was able to push them back. In late March, however, the first Iraqi offensive in two years, near Shahrani in the central sector, made no gains.

The change in Iraq's military fortunes, once the war had shifted to its territory, had two causes. First, troop morale and the coherence of Iraq's war aims were both enhanced by the overriding goal of defending Iraqi territory. Politically, Saddam Hussein's position was strengthened by the military threat of an Iranian conquest. Iraqi Shi'is shared with their fellow citizens fear of the violent

disruption of their lives which an Iranian victory would entail. Second, although Iraq had lost 117 warplanes and more than 2300 tanks and armored personnel carriers, it had managed to maintain a substantial inventory of weapons and ordnance. The chief supplier of advanced weaponry was France. Egypt was an important source of weapons and ammunition as well, including Chinese-made MiG-19s and 21s. Thus Iraq was able to maintain its pre-war strength in combat aircraft at around 332. Furthermore, once the war had shifted onto Iraqi territory, the Soviet Union resumed its military supply relationship with Baghdad.\*

Iran, for its part, managed to get certain military supplies through Syria, Libya, and Israel, and from states outside the region, mainly North Korea. War losses and the lack of spare parts reduced airworthy Iranian warplanes from about 445 to 80. Iran was forced to conserve their use for defensive purposes, to protect airfields, refineries, important cities and economic installations, rather than to provide air cover for its troops.

Iran still had the advantages of rising oil earnings and a greater political capacity to sustain casualties. Nevertheless, Iranian losses in the series of attacks up through February 1983 compelled Tehran to abandon reliance on large, concentrated "human wave" offensives. During that spring, the Iranians built up their forces all along the border with a view to overstretching Iraq's resources and exploiting Baghdad's vulnerability to a war of attrition. In an offensive that began July 20 in the Piranshahr area of the northern sector, dissident Iraqi Kurds and Shi'is reportedly fought with the Iranians. This battle brought the Iranians nine miles inside Iraq and captured the garrison of Haj Omran, cutting off Iraqi supplies to Iranian Kurdish insurgents. This time the Iraqi counter-attack failed to dislodge the Iranians, and on July 30 Iran moved six miles into Iraq on the central Mahran front. Baghdad acknowledged that it had implemented a "strategic retreat" in the central sector. In the occupied northern territory, Iran allowed the Tehran-based Supreme Assembly of the Islamic Revolution in Iraq (SAIRI) to open offices.

In the fall of 1983, Iraq prepared to initiate yet another phase in the war. Baghdad had already received from France, its main Western supplier, Exocet missiles which had proved effective in Argentinian hands during the Falkland Islands war, but it lacked a delivery system which allowed it to attack Iranian naval targets from a distance. In January 1983, Iraq had requested that France supply it with Super Etendard jet fighters which would allow it to threaten credibly Iran's oil exports by attacking tankers taking oil from the main export facility at Kharg Island. Iraq evidently had three objectives in mind. First, it would use the threat of such escalation to ward off any new major Iranian offensive. Second, faced with this threat, Iran might allow Iraq to renew its own oil exports through the Gulf or through the Syrian pipeline. In fact, Iran

\*Saddam Hussein later asserted that the minister was executed for knowingly importing tainted drugs. *Foreign Broadcast Information Service*, November 12, 1982.

\*\*In an interview, Majlis speaker Rafsanjani put total Iranian deaths in the war to this point at "40 to 50,000." (*Arabia*, August 1982) Iraqi deaths at this point were estimated to be 30,000. (*International Herald Tribune*, August 6, 1982).

\*It appears that the USSR began delivering previously contracted military supplies in the summer/fall of 1982, once the war shifted into Iraq. The subsequent Iranian government suppression of the Tudeh Party, beginning in the fall of 1982, left the Soviets little incentive to restrain arms shipments to Iraq. Although the Tudeh crackdown had several causes, probably the most important was Tudeh criticism of the government for pursuing the war into Iraq.





Obstacles to paratroop attack erected by Iraq.

Ali Ferayduni

responded with a threat to retaliate by hitting the oil exports of Iraq's allies in the Gulf, especially Saudi Arabia. From Baghdad's perspective, this would serve a third objective of transforming the struggle into an Arab-Iranian battle and prompting superpower pressure for a truce or direct US intervention against Iran.

Both Washington and Paris wanted to avoid an Iraqi military collapse; they agreed with Baghdad that Iran's attrition strategy had to be challenged. The US was primarily concerned about the consequences of an Iranian victory on the balance of political forces throughout the Arabian Peninsula. The French interest was more directly tied to the survival of Saddam Hussein. *Le Monde*, in May 1983, put French military sales to Iraq at \$5.6 billion since September 1980, plus \$4.7 billion in civilian and commercial contracts.<sup>22</sup> At least \$7 billion of this total was in the form of loans and credits which might be at risk if the present regime were to be replaced by one strongly under Iranian influence.<sup>23</sup> Iraq renewed its request for the Super

Etendards when Tariq Aziz visited Paris in May 1983. During that same visit, Aziz met with US Secretary of State George Shultz.

Iran appeared undeterred. In mid-September, Iranian forces crossed into Iraq in the Marivan area. On the third anniversary of the war, Khomeini warned that if Iranian oil exports were interrupted Iran would make sure that "not a drop of oil flowed through the Hormuz Straits." Tehran moved its elite troops to Larak, Henqin and Sirri islands in the Straits, and built up its artillery and anti-aircraft installations on Qeshm and Greater Tumb islands. The US concentrated its naval forces in the Gulf region and warned that Washington would not allow Iran to close off the Gulf to oil exports. On October 8, Iraq informed the US that it planned to employ Exocet-armed Super Etendards against Iran.

Iran launched another offensive in the northern sector on October 19, pushing Iraqi forces out of the territory between Baneh and Marivan and then advancing 25 miles

into Iraq. During these battles the first reports of Iraq using chemical weapons surfaced.<sup>24</sup> Iraq retaliated by mining the port of Bandar Khomeini and attacked Dizful, Masjid-i Suleiman and Behbahan with Scud-B surface-to-surface missiles, reportedly killing hundreds of civilians.

The immediate prospect of further escalation had no impact on peace proposals then in the air. Following the usual pattern, Iraq accepted and Iran rejected a UN Security Council call for a ceasefire. On November 2, Iraq confirmed the arrival in Iraq of the Super Etendard fighter jets. Heavy fighting continued on the northern front; Iraq's elite Presidential Guard joined the battles there on November 5. The spectre of a widening war came closer in December. A series of car-bombings in Kuwait against the US Embassy and other targets there seemed aimed at forcing Kuwait to halt its political and financial aid to Iraq. The next day Iraq launched missile attacks against five Iranian towns in retaliation.

The land war intensified again in February 1984 along the southern border. On February 15, Iranian forces moved towards Kut and claimed to shell the main Baghdad-Basra highway. On February 22-23, Iran claimed to have taken Qurna, at the junction of the Tigris and Euphrates rivers. Iraq denied both claims, and reports from the area indicated that the Iranians failed to maintain whatever gains they had made. Each side claimed to have inflicted thousands of casualties on the other. Iran then attacked across the marshlands near Basra on February 27, pushing some ten miles into Iraq and only four miles from the main north-south highway. Further large battles occurred over the next week. By March 5, though, Iraq claimed it had pushed the Iranians back at every point with the exception of the Majnoon Islands, the border site of a very large but undeveloped oil field.<sup>25</sup> During these battles of February and March, Iraq used mustard gas and other chemical weapons against Iranian combatants.<sup>26</sup>

Once again Iraq blunted the Iranian offensives but displayed no ability to turn the tide of battle. As of early 1983, Iraq had more than 300 first-line fighter bombers to less than 50 for Iran; in tanks Iraq had 3,000 and Iran only 8-900; and Iraq's 1800 heavy artillery pieces were double Iran's.<sup>27</sup> A year later the margin was, if anything, even more heavily in Iraq's favor. Still Iraq made no move to mount a counteroffensive. Iraqi forces remained in static positions. Iraq was beginning to use helicopter gunships effectively as battlefield support weapons, but this merely compensated for their use of tanks as pillboxes rather than mobile armor.

In February-March 1984, as a year earlier, Iraq effectively checked Iran's current "final offensives." Baghdad had used 1983 to stanch the erosion of its economy by securing additional credit and renegotiating interest and payments due, and to acquire additional advanced arms from France and the Soviet Union. It was thus in a better position in early 1984 to cope with Iran's strategy of attrition. There was still one major point of vulnerability, though, which both countries shared to some degree: how long could these armies continue locked in combat before one or the other snapped? As one American military analyst observed, "This collapse could come at any time or never."<sup>28</sup> Iraq has been unable to utilize advantages such as air power to retake its territory or impose unacceptable

casualties on the Iranians. This was the situation Iraq attempted to compensate for by acquiring sophisticated weapons systems to strike at Iran's oil exports.

## Phase Five: The Tanker War

From the very first days of this war, both combatants had made serious efforts to destroy economic installations and particularly oil production and export facilities. As the conflict wore on, and both sides conserved their air power in favor of land maneuvers, attacks against economic targets tended to be restricted to the southern border region. The huge Iranian refinery, petrochemical and export facility at Abadan was the site of one of the longest sieges of the war. On the Iraqi side, much of its industrial infrastructure—steel, fertilizer and petrochemical plants among others—was concentrated in the area around Basra, and Iraq's main oil exporting facilities were centered there as well.

Iraq maintained attacks against Iranian shipping throughout the war. Most of these took place around the port of Bandar Khomeini, at the head of the Gulf and close to the war zone. The targets were freighters of various nationalities. About 50 such attacks were recorded in the first three and a half years of the war. Iraq also kept up attacks against Kharg Island, Iran's main crude exporting terminal. Kharg had been closed by the first weeks of fighting, but was quickly repaired and its anti-aircraft defenses strengthened. In July 1982, as Iran prepared to carry the war into Iraqi territory, Iraqi raids on Kharg doubled insurance premiums and reduced tanker traffic there. On August 12, 1982, Baghdad declared the northern part of the Gulf a military exclusion zone. On August 18, surface to surface missiles slammed into Kharg's T jetty from Basra, 120 miles away. On August 25, Iraqi warplanes raided the island again. Iranian exports fell from around 1.8 million barrels a day to an estimated 700,000 mbd.<sup>29</sup> Further Iraqi attacks were reported over the next few weeks, but Iranian price discounts succeeded in stabilizing exports at a level only slightly below that preceding the attacks.<sup>30</sup> For reasons that are not clear, Iraq was unable to maintain this pressure on Iranian exports.

This is the campaign Iraq was trying to revive in a more credible fashion by introducing the Etendard-Exocet system.\* Judging from the extended preliminary publicity which Baghdad devoted to this acquisition, the Iraqis were clearly hoping that the mere threat of its use would pressure Iran (and Syria) into allowing Iraq to resume its own exports either through Syria or through the Gulf. France, the Soviet Union and Iraq's Arab allies tried and failed to persuade Damascus to allow Iraq use of the pipeline from Mosul to Baniyas that had been closed in April 1982. Late in 1983, Iraq purchased several oil-loading buoys from the US construction firm of Brown and Root, which would allow for limited exports via the Gulf until more permanent facilities could be rebuilt or replaced. In

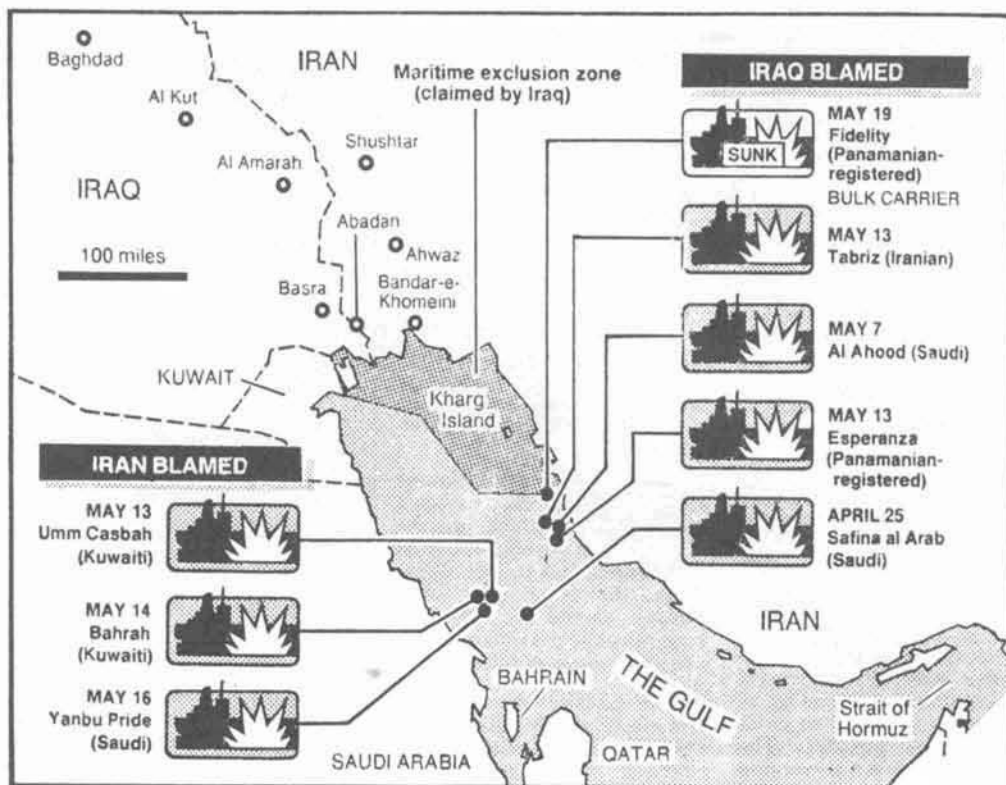
\*Even with the Etendard/Exocet system, Iraq would probably not be able to destroy the Kharg terminal itself. Key equipment and storage facilities are underground, and oil loading can be done by gravity hookup, without pumping machines. According to one report, US experts during the hostage crisis concluded that the only way to take out Kharg would be to land a commando team that could systematically detonate explosive charges throughout the terminal's installations. (*Christian Science Monitor*, July 13, 1984)

the absence of assurances from Iran barring attacks, however, Baghdad has been unable to convince foreign contractors to install them, and at last report they were gathering dust in a Bahrain warehouse.<sup>31</sup>

On March 27 Iraq announced it had used the Etendard-Exocet combination for the first time, attacking two small tankers southwest of Kharg. The attacks occurred just as the National Iranian Oil Company was beginning negotiations with Japanese traders for the renewal of a contract for 200,000 b/d of crude. Some oil industry observers had speculated that these attacks would begin in March or April. Iraq had expanded its exports a bit via improvements in the Turkey pipeline, and Saudi Arabia had set up a "floating stockpile" of some 60 million barrels of oil in chartered supertankers located strategically near the

sides, 10 of them oil tankers. Oil prices in the usually sensitive spot market showed no movement. Insurance rates rose sharply for ships going to Kharg, from 0.25 percent to 7.5 percent by the end of May. This translated into an increased cost of between \$1 and \$1.50 per barrel of oil, and Iran quickly offered compensatory price discounts. Iranian exports fell by about half as customers diversified their supplies.

The situation escalated further in early June. The Iraqis sank a Turkish-flag tanker off Kharg on June 3, and two days later American-assisted Saudi jet fighters downed an Iranian jet over the middle of the Gulf. On June 10, a Kuwaiti tanker was hit near Qatar. This attack, presumably Iranian, was the first in the lower Gulf; the fact that the Saudis did not challenge it despite ample warning time



The Times (London)

major markets. Iran had been exporting from Kharg at the exceptional rate of three million b/d following Iraq's February 27 declaration of a blockade.<sup>32</sup> Risks of supply or price disruptions from any escalation of the war were thus minimized.

This new phase of the war began in earnest on April 18, when the Iraqis hit a small Panamanian tanker just outside Kharg. The Iraqis hit a large Saudi-owned tanker on April 26, and another on May 7.\* On May 13, a Kuwaiti tanker was hit near Bahrain. This was the first Iranian attack on commercial shipping (although Iran never acknowledged responsibility for this or any subsequent attacks). Within five weeks, eleven ships were hit by both

seemed to signal Saudi intent to limit the expansion of the fighting.

On Monday, June 11, the day after the Kuwaiti tanker was hit, both Iran and Iraq accepted a UN-initiated halt to shelling each other's cities and towns. Iran's exports from Kharg had reportedly returned to near normal at 1.6 million barrels a day. On June 15, Majlis speaker Rafsanjani proposed extending the truce to include Gulf shipping as well. Iraq insisted that any such truce must allow it to repair or replace its own export facilities in the Gulf, to which Iran made no response. On June 20, Washington announced that Saudi Arabia had set up an "air defense interception zone" known as the "Fahd line" which went beyond Saudi territorial limits.<sup>33</sup> This would allow Saudi F-15s, guided by USAF AWACs and refueled by USAF KC-10 tankers, to engage other aircraft threatening Gulf shipping. At the end of June, Iraq resumed occasional attacks on several tankers and other ships at the northern end of the Gulf.

\*The Iraqi attack against a Saudi-owned tanker was not the result of any "confusion," as Saudi Oil Minister Yamani tried to suggest. This was Iraq's way of signalling its determination to threaten any and all shipping moving to or from Iranian ports. Safina al-Arab, the large tanker hit on April 26, belonged to as-Safina Company, one of whose principal shareholders is King Fahd's son Faisal. It was heading from Kharg with 2.6 million barrels of Iranian crude bound for France, Iraq's main Western ally. See *Arab Oil and Gas*, May 16, 1984.



## The War and the Future

Iraq has succeeded to a considerable degree in transforming the war into an Arab-Iranian struggle.\* In the process, Baghdad has also engaged US military support at a higher level. In staving off defeat, however, Baghdad is still far from victory. There is every likelihood that the focus of the conflict will shift back to the land war, especially along the southern front. Iran does not have the air power to take on the Saudis and their US patrons. Its relative advantages lay on the ground. Since March, Iran has maintained hundreds of thousands of troops, perhaps half a million, on the southern front poised to take Basra or cut it off from the rest of the country. Success in this endeavor would probably trigger an Iraqi military collapse and the fall of Saddam Hussein. Iran would then accept a cease-fire quickly, confident that any successor Ba'ath regime would not long survive a post-war realignment of power. Such a dramatic Iranian victory or Iraqi collapse might also prompt direct US intervention, in the form of several F-15 squadrons operating from Saudi Arabia.\*\*

While there is virtually no chance that Iran will lose this war, in the sense of having its territory occupied or its government removed, the developments of the latest phase cast serious doubts on its ability to impose its terms on Iraq and its Gulf allies. Baghdad long ago abandoned its original war aims, but Tehran as yet is unprepared to acknowledge Saddam Hussein's political tenure. Iran's failure to take and hold Iraqi territory in its previous offensives, and Iraq's improved defensive position in the

last several months, make an Iranian breakthrough increasingly unlikely.

Speculative reports of divisions within the Iranian leadership may be correct, but there is every reason to expect at least one more major Iranian ground offensive. If it fails, it seems doubtful that Iran can continue the struggle at the same level of intensity as it has for the past four years. The war will continue, but probably subside to a level of border clashes and mutual subversion. This would serve the interests of both regimes while seriously threatening neither. Both sides would no doubt engage in a crash effort to rebuild their military inventories at a very high level of technology, thus providing lucrative markets for US, French and other arms merchants while setting the stage for another, even more destructive rematch in years to come.

Both sides would also have to undertake vast and expensive economic reconstruction projects. The combination of economic reconstruction, military refurbishment and (at least in the case of Iraq) payment of deferred and rescheduled debts will place great pressure on both countries to expand rapidly their oil exports and earnings. While the immediate question may be how to cope with a threatened reduction in oil supplies, the more persistent problem is likely to be how the world oil market, with its present surfeit, will allocate production allowances to these two major producers. Any increase in Iraqi exports, for instance, would tend to come at the expense of Saudi Arabia.

What seems most unlikely is that a formal, negotiated peace treaty will emerge from this present phase, or that it would be very durable if it did. The blood, treasure and political capital invested by both sides make such a pacific resolution almost inconceivable. Instead, we are likely to witness a long period of hostility and recrimination. ■

\*One of the first indications of this was the March 14, 1984 Baghdad meeting of Arab foreign ministers, including those from Algeria and the UAE, which condemned Iran for continuing the war.

\*\*See the article by Joe Stork and Martha Wenger in this issue.

### Footnotes

<sup>1</sup>British Broadcasting Corporation, *Summary of World Broadcasts*, May 9, 1983.

<sup>2</sup>*Middle East Economic Digest (MEED)*, April 9, 1982.

<sup>3</sup>*Washington Post (WP)*, February 24, 1984.

<sup>4</sup>International Committee of the Red Cross (Geneva) Press Release #1462, May 11, 1983.

<sup>5</sup>*New York Times (NYT)*, October 16, 1980.

<sup>6</sup>Eric Rouleau, "The War and the Struggle for the State," *MERIP Reports* #98 (July-August 1981).

<sup>7</sup>*NYT* September 23, 1980.

<sup>8</sup>See, for instance, *NYT*, October 24, 1980. For a thoroughgoing critique of Iraqi strategy and tactics, see Anthony Cordesman, *The Gulf and the Search for Strategic Stability* (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1984), chapter 16.

<sup>9</sup>Unless otherwise noted, citations can be found in the chronologies of the *Middle East Journal* for this period.

<sup>10</sup>*WP*, April 19, 1981.

<sup>11</sup>*NYT*, April 5, 1981.

<sup>12</sup>*NYT*, December 10, 1982.

<sup>13</sup>*WP*, April 1, 1982.

<sup>14</sup>*Financial Times*, April 2, 1982.

<sup>15</sup>*Defense & Foreign Affairs*, June 1983, citing al-Ahram al-Iqtisadi.

<sup>16</sup>*WP*, May 21, 1982.

<sup>17</sup>*The Guardian* (London), April 8, 1982.

<sup>18</sup>*Ibid.*, February 1, 1982.

<sup>19</sup>Iraq News Agency, May 23, 1982; *Foreign Broadcast Information Service (FBIS)*, May 24, 1982.

<sup>20</sup>*MEED*, February 18, 1983.

<sup>21</sup>David Hirst in *The Guardian* (London), May 31, 1982. Others have observed that it would be highly uncharacteristic of the Saudi rulers to involve themselves in a project of this sort.

<sup>22</sup>*Wall Street Journal*, August 19, 1983.

<sup>23</sup>*Economist*, February 19, 1983.

<sup>24</sup>*The Guardian* (London), November 25, 1983.

<sup>25</sup>*NYT*, February 18, 1984; *WP*, February 24, 1984; *Economist*, March 10, 1984.

<sup>26</sup>Details on Iraqi chemical warfare and the US government response are in Seymour Hersh's story in the *New York Times*, March 30, 1984.

<sup>27</sup>Anthony Cordesman in *Armed Forces Journal International*, May 1983.

<sup>28</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>29</sup>*Middle East Economic Survey (MEES)*, August 30, 1982.

<sup>30</sup>*Arab Oil and Gas*, September 16, 1982; October 16, 1982.

<sup>31</sup>*Middle East Reporter* (Beirut), January 14, 1984.

<sup>32</sup>*MEES*, March 5, 1984.

<sup>33</sup>*NYT*, June 21, 1984.





On the Iranian frontline.

Sa'jd Sadeghi

# Checkmate in the Gulf War

Ghassan Salameh

**T**he war between Iraq and Iran has let loose a flood of commentary and upset many predictions since it began nearly four years ago. Those who expected another oil crisis were relieved to find an oil glut. Those who anticipated a quick Iraqi victory are now facing the possibility of new Iranian offensives into Iraqi territory. Those who feared an immediate globalization of the conflict have had to revise their prognostications.

To the extent that it began as a religious war, it was gradually transformed into a conventional war between two neighboring states. While there was reason to fear a regionalization or even an internationalization of the conflict, it has proven to be a typical limited war, for

neither side has mobilized all its resources and the involvement of other countries has not been extensive. Finally, though it was launched as a pre-emptive strike, it has become a war of position—even a war of attrition. One state tries to take advantage of the stalemate to bring about the early collapse of its adversary, while the other tries to end the stand-off by provoking outside intervention.

The Iran-Iraq war began as a kind of religious war, in the sense that Iran under Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini was the bearer of a fundamentalist reform that sought the allegiance of all Shi'is—if not all Muslims—starting with the majority Shi'i population of neighboring Iraq. Like many revolutions in their early stages, the Iranian revo-

lution was inclined to go beyond the borders of the state where it began as a means of consolidating its position at home. Tehran, moreover, was not averse to challenging the established states or regimes in the area. This ideological dimension was intensified by two factors: first, the Iranian revolution was essentially led by men of religion rather than by military men or professional politicians; second, Iran could be expected to maintain (by different means, of course) the hegemony it had established in the Gulf region under previous dynasties.

In Iraq as well as Iran, ideology is used to legitimize a despotic or authoritarian regime founded on a revolution or a *coup d'état*. In Iraq, the Ba'athist regime manipulates socialist, modernist and secular concepts like a religion, with its institutions, its pan-Arabist utopia and its "theology." Behind the modernist facade, the pan-Arabist nationalism invoked in Baghdad is heavily influenced by structures like those of any state religion.

## "Trotskyites of Islam"

An intense ideological battle ensued after the fall of the shah. There were daily provocations from the Iranian side. "We are the Trotskyites of Islam," said Ibrahim Yazdi, the first foreign minister of the Islamic Republic. Khomeini put his finger on the Iraqi sin: when Saddam Hussein says "We are Arabs," he means "not Muslims." Bani-Sadr enthusiastically joined the chorus before his fall from grace: "Arab nationalism, like Zionism, is a form of racism." The Iranian media labeled the Iraqi president *kefir*—atheist—or worse, "aflaqi"—after Michel Aflaq, the (Christian) founder of the Ba'ath Party. The Iraqi regime was faithful to its nationalist ideology, portraying the conflict with its neighbor as a new round in the age-old battle between the secular, Persian, Zoroastrian, etc., enemy and the Arab nation as represented by Baghdad, sure to prevail this time. Khomeini was nothing but a "turbanned shah" pursuing Iranian expansionism under the cover of religion.

Baghdad gave varying degrees of support to Iranian groups opposing the "mullahcracy." More importantly, it was counting on the support of the two million Arabs who live in the southern Iranian province of Khuzistan, hoping they would rally to the Iraqi cause in the name of Arabism. Tehran, meanwhile, supported various Iraqi opposition groups, but was primarily interested in the Iraqi Shi'i community, which Tehran expected to revolt against the "artificial state borders" and join the Islamic revolution.

The tension between the two states was aggravated by various assassination attempts, acts of sabotage, border skirmishes and hostile propaganda. This was the situation on the eve of the war and during its first days. The political-ideological conflict clearly overshadowed the territorial question. Despite several ill-considered statements from Baghdad (hastily retracted, often by the same official who made them), neither party was apparently planning to acquire territory by force, as in the Horn of Africa or the Arab-Israeli conflict.

The Shatt al-Arab is less a real subject of dispute than a fixation left over from the Ottoman-Persian rivalry, which had taken on a religious coloring in the early sixteenth

century when Iran adopted Twelver Shi'ism. Safavid Iran had weakened the Ottoman position through successive incidents. In 1747, Nadir Shah forcefully annexed the area not long after having recognized Ottoman sovereignty over it. The second Treaty of Erzerum [1847] guaranteed Persian navigation rights and gave Iran the east bank of the Shatt, but the shah at the time claimed the whole of Iraq as an Iranian province. The European powers intervened here, as elsewhere, in the interest of maintaining the territorial integrity of the Ottoman Empire. After the empire was broken up they continued to intervene in favor of the territorial integrity of the states that were carved out of it, particularly the Hashemite monarchies. The Iraqi position was more or less encoded in a 1937 border treaty between the two states, but this did not prevent Iraq from denouncing it in 1959, just when the shah was beginning the process of building his country into the "policeman of the Gulf." Applying pressure on Baghdad by aiding the Kurdish rebels, Tehran obtained the demarcation of the frontier along the *thalweg* line\* in 1975 through the Algiers agreement.

Despite the gradual improvement in the Iranian position, the Shatt was more a matter of symbolic than geostrategic importance. In fact, Tehran had traditionally measured its strength in terms of the balance of power with its Iraqi neighbor. Every additional square kilometer acquired on the Shatt meant an improvement in this balance that could enhance the regime's domestic standing.

Nevertheless, the Shatt and other border territories will in all likelihood be central to any solution. One of the lessons this war has driven home is that in the contemporary international system, nation-states are too well entrenched to be easily displaced by pan-nationalist or religious "transnational" forces. The state generally prevails over the nation, as reality conquers utopia.

## Ideology Succumbs

While the first weeks of the war brought Iraq some success, a number of disturbing facts soon became apparent. The Arab world did not embrace this war as its own. The Gulf states offered financial and logistic support, but wasted no time in forming a closed club, the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC), which did not include Iraq. Syria, Libya, South Yemen and, to a lesser extent, Algeria appeared to lean toward the Iranian side. Morocco offered Iraq verbal support, Sudan and North Yemen promised to send troops, while Jordan actually sent several hundred "volunteers." Egypt was isolated by its treaty with Israel, and its statements in support of Iraq were so obviously motivated by the desire to break out of this isolation that they could not inspire a genuine current of pro-Iraqi sentiment in the Arab world. Despite a certain discreet sympathy, Arab public opinion failed to take up the Iraqi war as a sacred cause like that of the Palestinians. Meanwhile, in Khorramshahr, Arabs of Iranian nationality didn't wait to receive the Iraqi troops as "liberators" but fled the war zone along with the rest of the population.

\*Mid-channel, or the line of greatest depth.

Iran was similarly disappointed, to the extent that the Iraqi Shi'is were seen as a source of potential support. A number of factors worked to frustrate the hopes of the Khomeini regime, including the traditional loyalty of the Iraqi Shi'is, the overwhelming majority of whom are ethnic Arabs. Another factor was Baghdad's skillful combination of bloody repression (the assassination of Ayatollah Bakr al-Sadr) and religious concessions (the renovation of holy places, the distribution of government-produced anti-atheist pamphlets). The Iraqi regime even found more than one Shi'i dignitary to defend it. Also, the Islamic revolution was largely discredited by the bloody power struggle and the fierce repression then taking place in Iran. Finally, Iraqi military setbacks favored the rebirth of patriotic sentiment. An Iraqi dissident described his predicament in these terms: "I would love to see Saddam fall, but it would be a disaster if Iran were to use this to force its own people on Baghdad."

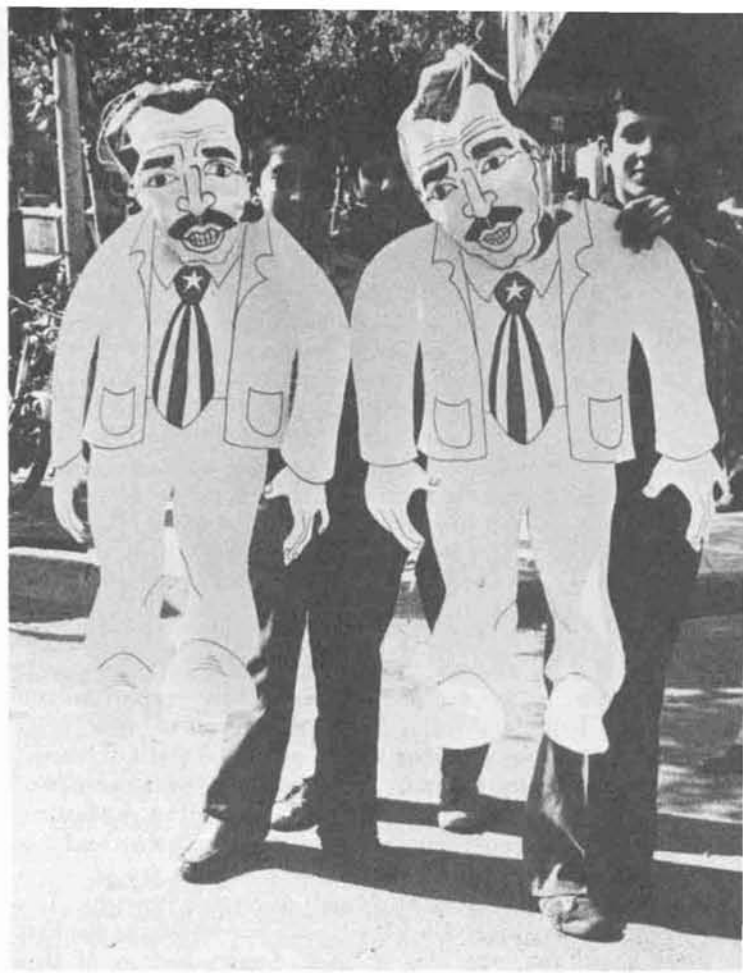
These developments demonstrate the collapse of the ideological factor. In fact, ideology was one of the first victims of the war, along with the simplistic explanations offered by orientalist and apologists for both sides who flatly rejected a political analysis of the conflict in favor of factors peculiar to "the specificity of Shiism." By lasting as long as it has, the war has become "mundane." It now preoccupies specialists in war and politics much more than the "faithful masses." If a militant tone is still being sounded in Iran, it is not coming from the people. Peace and bread are the major concerns of the person in the street. Nowadays the war signifies the failure (and yet the survival) of two regimes facing problems of legitimacy. With the military stalemate, the Iran-Iraq war has gradually come to seem like "a war over nothing."

## Revised Scenarios

When the war began, several observers had predicted the inevitable escalation of the conflict to include other countries in the region or even the intervention of the two superpowers. Both belligerents encouraged this view but it, too, had to be substantially revised.

Such dire expectations were understandable when the war broke out on September 22, 1980. Iran had been occupying three islands since 1971 (the Greater and Lesser Tumbs and Abu Musa) that had belonged to the United Arab Emirates (UAE). The new Iranian leaders, beginning with Bani-Sadr, had categorically refused to return them to the UAE. Abetted by certain UAE leaders, notably the shakh of Ras al-Khaimah, Iraq had made the "recapture" of these islands one of its objectives. According to sources in Abu Dhabi, Iraq was contemplating a helicopter mission staged from UAE territory. But the Saudi "big brother" and Shaikh Zaid, president of the UAE, successfully opposed such close collaboration.

Put on the defensive, Iran could consider several tactics to increase the pressure on the Gulf monarchies, which it criticized for providing Iraq with facilities and condemned as *taghout* (corrupt and unjust). Iran had even threatened to close the Strait of Hormuz if it found itself backed into a corner militarily.



Effigies of Saddam Hussein in Tehran.

Randy Goodman

Iran already had many disagreements with the individual GCC states. Oman was supporting Sadat's Egypt and offering bases to the United States. From Iran's point of view, Bahrain was its "fourteenth province." Had it not acquired its independence as a result of international pressure, and did its Sunni *emir* not treat the Shi'i majority like second-class citizens? Dubai and Sharjah were discreet but important transit points for goods being smuggled to the Iranian black market. Half of the merchandise Iraq imported passed through Kuwait. And finally, Saudi Arabia was nothing but a forward base for the American "Great Satan." Apart from all this, could a revolution so confident in its divine inspiration see itself confined to the borders of Iran? Like the October Revolution in the USSR, the young Iranian Revolution apparently needed time before it became resigned to the idea of "Islam in one country."

Iran definitely did not play a passive role. Several times it threatened the Gulf states with retaliation should they get more actively involved in supporting Baghdad. The AWACs dispatched to Saudi Arabia from Washington a few days after the fighting began detected Iranian jets heading for Saudi territory on more than one occasion, notably in January 1983. Much more serious were the Iranian airborne attacks on Kuwaiti territory: goods destined for Iraq were targeted on November 12 and 16, 1980, and June 13,



1981, and the Kuwaiti petroleum installations at Umm al-Aish were attacked on October 1, 1981.

Nevertheless, Tehran could not ignore the American presence in Saudi Arabia, Bahrain and Oman, and wanted to maintain its unofficial but longstanding contacts with most of the GCC capitals, in particular Kuwait and Abu Dhabi. Tehran was disturbed by the prospect of increased Arab hostility, and the effect an escalation in the fighting might have on its relations with Pakistan, Turkey and, of course, the West. For these reasons, as well as the need to concentrate its military effort on the Iraqi front, Tehran avoided a confrontation with the GCC states. After the first Iranian success in late 1981, followed by another in June 1982, these states could well begin to fear for their own future. They took a low profile while making diplomatic and possibly even financial overtures to Iran. This tendency toward disengagement has persisted.

## In Iraq's Camp

Several Middle Eastern states outside the Gulf region took a position on the conflict but kept their support within certain bounds. Jordan has been the most open in its support of Iraq, granting it unconditional right of transit through the Red Sea port of Aqaba, sending hundreds of "volunteers" to the front and providing unfailing diplomatic support. But this is not Amman's war, and it is unlikely that Jordan could involve its own troops, even symbolically, without an Israeli or Syrian reaction. The tension along the Syrian-Jordanian border during the first weeks of the war was a clear demonstration of this limitation. Nevertheless, Jordan gained considerably from this war, especially the first phases, when its industry and re-export trade boomed. Later on, Iraq's problems hurt Jordan, reversing many of the earlier benefits.

Egypt at first seemed inhibited by the Camp David agreements and its resulting isolation within the Arab world. As the situation on the ground shifted in favor of Iran, however, Cairo could no longer afford to ignore Baghdad's unofficial appeals. Riyadh was urging Cairo to share the burden: it was a golden opportunity to rejoin the Arab fold. Thus the traffic in Soviet-model (if not Soviet-made) arms, spare parts and ammunition expanded, just when Moscow was reassessing its aid to Iraq prior to the July 1982 turning point. Egyptian strategic interests dictated this move, given that Israel was providing the Iranians with the same service. Cairo also turned a blind eye to the participation of several thousand Egyptian "volunteers" (17,000 according to an Arab diplomatic source in February 1983). Immigrant workers already present in Iraq were sent to the front while Egyptian officers were drawn by a salary seven or eight times what they would receive from their own government. On the diplomatic level, the damage done by Sadat's support for the shah was "repaired" by Mubarak's support for the "threatened Arab brother." Despite numerous "leaks," Egypt probably never considered sending its own troops, although there have been several precedents for this, including the 1961 Kuwait affair and the 1962-67 Yemen war. North Yemen, Sudan, Tunisia and Morocco seem to be allowing their "volunteers" to join the Iraqi ranks.

## Neighbors and Rivals

There were few countries prepared to support Iran. South Yemen leaned in this direction, but not so far as to commit itself. Algeria, despite initial support for Iran, thought better to cultivate its role as a future mediator in the conflict. Far from the battlefield, Libya gave fervent vocal support to Tehran, but it too subsequently moderated its rhetoric.

Two countries have rather unexpectedly found themselves together in the pro-Tehran camp. Since Syria is a neighbor and rival of Iraq, its support for Iran has influenced the progress of the war. The exceptional Baghdad-Damascus honeymoon after the November 1978 Baghdad summit had barely lasted a few months. Preparing for the war and drawing closer to the Saudis, Saddam Hussein put an end to the rapprochement in July 1979. Iraqi-Syrian relations deteriorated to the point that when the war broke out Damascus unequivocally sided with Tehran. In October 1981, without offering any proof, Iraq accused Syria of allowing the Iranians to attack Iraq from Syrian airfields. In April 1982, Damascus closed down the Mosul-Mediterranean oil pipeline. In the spring of 1982 it was revealed that Syria was supplying Iran with substantial quantities of arms, probably including Soviet-made radar. In late January 1983, Iran, Syria and Libya joined in a tripartite declaration of support for Iran and "the progressive Iraqi forces struggling to rid their country of Saddam Hussein." All these provocations could have led to open hostilities, but Iraq knew it could not respond without the risk of opening a Syrian front, while Syria refrained from taking more direct action for fear of provoking a hostile reaction from the Gulf states and the West.\* Damascus seems content to support certain Iraqi opposition groups and to sell Soviet arms to Iran.

Israel has been the main supplier of American-made spare parts to Iran. Only extreme opposition to Arab interests and the adventurism of the Begin-Sharon government can explain Israel's continued support of a country that would theoretically like to see it vanish from the map. Iran's reticence on the question of Israeli assistance was easily challenged by the accumulating details of press reports.\*\* But Israel was also bound by certain limitations. This was not its war, and any intervention would risk dividing the Israeli public and provoking the ire of Washington. Also, Sharon was preparing his own war on targets north of Israel.

## Moscow and Washington

International polarization of the conflict has been much less clear-cut than it has been portrayed. Two extreme interpretations were soon invalidated. According to the first, Moscow was supporting Iraq and therefore

\*Syria was also facing Israel in Lebanon and substantial Muslim Brotherhood opposition at home.

\*\*See *Afrique-Asie*, October 20, 1980; *The Observer*, November 2, 1980; *Die Welt*, November 2, 1980; *The Sunday Times*, July 26, 1981; *Le Figaro*, July 27, 1981; *Haaretz*, August 23, 1981; etc.



Washington would be forced to support Iran in spite of the serious disagreements between them. It was said that Baghdad had been tied to Moscow by a treaty since 1972; that Moscow sought closer relations with the Arab camp, particularly with the Gulf states; that Iran was beyond reach since its leaders knew they couldn't get any closer to the Soviet Union without being swallowed up in its empire; that Moscow feared the repercussions of religious fundamentalism in Soviet Central Asia; that it needed Arab neutrality in the Afghan affair. But this interpretation didn't correspond to the facts: the pro-Soviet countries in the region (Syria, Libya, South Yemen) were siding with Iran; Soviet arms shipments to Iraq had fallen off during the first months of the war, and official Soviet statements seemed restrained.

Neither did the opposite interpretation line up with the facts. The two superpowers were said to have gradually exchanged positions, as had happened in the Horn of Africa, with Washington now supporting Iraq and Moscow supporting Iran. On the Iranian side there were the Arab communist parties and countries friendly to the USSR, and on the Iraqi side there were the pro-Western states like Saudi Arabia, Jordan, Egypt, and of course France, not to mention the consequences of the hostage crisis. But statements from Washington indicate that it has never written off Iran, the most important state in the Gulf. Washington has said it would oppose any partition of Iran or any change in the territorial *status quo*. While American-Iraqi relations have improved somewhat, they could not be called warm. At the same time, Moscow no longer feels threatened by "Iranian reactionary circles with some influence on the Ayatollah."

The Iraqis have asserted from time to time that both superpowers are supporting Iran. The speaker of the Iranian Majlis, Ali Akhbar Hashemi Rafsanjani, claims that the exact opposite is true. What is the true state of affairs? In fact, both are typical non-aligned regimes, founded on a specific, indigenous ideology (Arab or Islamic), circumspect toward the Soviets, intolerant of local communist parties yet ready to condemn American imperialism. Fidel Castro would find little in common with either Saddam Hussein or the Ayatollah, both of whom roundly opposed the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan, and King Fahd might find it difficult to choose between the religious fanatic and the somber republican. Clearly, the East-West axis does not line up with the Shatt al-Arab.

The conflict would appear to be a no-win situation for the two superpowers, yet both actively seek to benefit from it by improving their positions. Unfortunately for Saddam Hussein, they seem to consider Iran the key state in the region—like Ethiopia in the Horn—by virtue of its size, resources and a strategic position on the Gulf and the Indian Ocean, not to mention its long border with the USSR. At the same time, neither superpower wants to lose access to Iraq or risk offending the "oil monarchies." They would like to avoid a geographic expansion of the conflict and, above all, a clear victory on either side. The undeniable weakening of both Iran and Iraq has not necessarily had negative consequences for the superpowers, since Washington is preoccupied with Saudi Arabia and Pakistan, while Moscow may see the situation as ultimately providing better opportunities for local communist parties.



In late 1981, President Seyyid Ali Khamenei and Ground Forces Commander Seyyid Shirazi review military cadets bound for war.

Randy Goodman

One would not want to suggest collusion, but it appears that the conflict has not brought the superpowers into confrontation. The US and USSR seem less interested in the war than in the political trajectory of the two regimes, particularly that of the Iranian regime: closer alignment with either of the two blocs as well as major strategic interests depend on this much more than on the outcome of the war itself. And if the attitude of each regime toward its own communist party is any indication, Iran and Iraq would appear to have gradually resumed their pre-war relationships with the USSR. The dissolution of the Iranian communist party and the arrest of its leaders would seem to reflect a deterioration in Soviet-Iranian relations, while renewed contacts between the Baghdad regime and the leaders of the Iraqi Communist Party would indicate Iraqi acknowledgement of the USSR.

## Strategies Checked

If third parties are reluctant to enter this war, the two adversaries seem incapable of ending it. Iraq's 1980 objectives have been forgotten and Iran's 1982 goals have been compromised. The would-be lightning war was launched in spectacular style, but was followed by an Iranian counteroffensive that threatened to bring Khomeini's troops to the gates of Baghdad. Now the conflict has bogged down into a dreary, static war of position in which victory appears nearly impossible.

It is difficult now to understand Iraqi strategy during the first few weeks of the war. It attacked four targets along a 600-kilometer stretch of the border. Baghdad had attempted to repeat Israel's June 1967 feat by destroying the Iranian Air Force on the ground, but the aircraft had already been moved to underground hangars a few weeks

before the strike. The army and Revolutionary Guards had increased preparedness on the ground, especially after the September 4, 1980 border incidents. Iraqi troop movement was clumsy, hampered by Iranian airborne attacks and held up by the lack of spare parts as much as by the determined resistance in the cities. Advances in the northern sector (Khanaqin) and in the area around Dizful were especially costly.

Baghdad apparently decided to focus its effort on the southern sector in the second week of the war. It made no attempt to move from al-Amarah to Susangard, which would have put it in a position to cut Iran's principal north-south artery and eventually neutralize the Iranian air base at Dizful to the northeast or occupy the major transport center of Ahwaz to the southeast. Instead, it opted for the southern sector where the two cities of Khorramshahr and Abadan lie closer together, and whose petroleum and port installations are extremely important. It was hoping that Iranian Arabs concentrated in the south would cooperate with its invading forces. Baghdad thus exposed a weak point in its strategy: rather than strike at Iran's military capability, Iraq sought to capture valuable bargaining chips for use in future negotiations. This amounted to an Iraqi misperception of Khomeini's temperament and a disregard for the inevitable reinforcement of any revolution faced with external aggression. It took five long weeks to capture Khorramshahr, and the Iraqi offensive did not penetrate Abadan at all. The Iranians put up a fierce fight in the cities: Qasr-i-Shirin in the North, Susangard in the central sector and Khorramshahr in the south checked the Iraqi advance, which couldn't move beyond a line approximately 20 kilometers inside Iranian territory. Having concentrated its efforts on the cities, the Iraqi north-south penetration now came to a halt. Troop performance was mediocre. Moreover, it is incomprehensible why only three or four of Iraq's thirteen divisions were committed to the battle.

The Iranian response was one of determined resistance within and around the border towns, and extensive air strikes mostly against economic targets. With the power struggle at its height in Tehran, the hastily planned Iranian counterattack of January 1981 ended in failure. Almost a year would pass before there was any significant change at the front. In early September 1981, the Iranian 16th and 92nd armored divisions forced the Iraqis to retreat from a number of desert positions. Toward the middle of September, Iraq was forced to pull back its troops west of the Karun River, thus ending its fruitless encirclement of Abadan.

The Iranians continued to mount counteroffensives. Bustan in the central sector was recaptured with the late November 1981 onslaught, while the battle in the north (Sumer and Shah-i-pol) was less decisive. Iran concentrated its efforts in the southern sector during the second half of March 1982, forcing the Iraqi Army to redeploy along a line more or less coinciding with the border. At the end of April it launched a "holy war," retaking Khorramshahr without much difficulty on May 24. In late June 1982 Iraq withdrew from most of the positions it still held in Iranian territory.

The war entered a new stalemate, with offensive and defensive roles reversed. Iran's July 1982 offensive in the

south was inconclusive. Another one in the north in October 1982 improved the Iranian position but failed to break through Iraqi defense lines around Mandali. Weakened by losses in its airforce and artillery, Iran no longer appeared capable of sustaining its effort. It continued to mount impressive "human waves," but they seemed to include fewer and fewer adults. Its only armored infantry division was blocked east of Basra. Troop morale had declined since the recapture of Khorramshahr six months earlier.

The "Muharram" offensive of November 1982, launched in the middle of the rainy season, was intended to interfere with Iraqi troop movement in the al-Amarah area (Maysan) and, if successful, proceed to cut the Baghdad-Basra highway, some 50 kilometers from the Iranian positions. A 300-square kilometer pocket of Iraqi territory was occupied, but Iraq managed to resist the Iranian assault by calling in its Gazelle helicopters. The new Iraqi air superiority was forcing Iran to launch its attacks before dawn. On the ground, Baghdad's arsenal now included some 400 new T-55 tanks and 250 new Polish- and Soviet-made T-72s, Soviet deliveries most likely having resumed four or five months earlier.

The fourth major Iranian offensive, launched in February 1983, was supposed to be "the final and fatal blow to Iraq." Iranian troops were massed on the plains between Dizful and al-Amarah, facing the Iraqi 4th Army under the command of General Hussein Fakhri. This offensive was no more decisive than the preceding ones. Iran managed to occupy a few additional square kilometers at the cost of thousands of casualties.

Despite enormous losses on both sides, Iran's four major offensives did not substantially improve its position. . . . Nevertheless, it has several advantages to counterbalance Iraq's political and financial ability to resupply and even expand its arsenal. Iran has a lengthy coastline on the Gulf and the Arabian Sea, while the Iraqi port of Basra has been closed since the first days of the war. Tehran is hundreds of kilometers from the frontier, while Baghdad is much closer to it. Iran has a 2.5 to 1 advantage in population and, in spite of the bloody power struggle in Tehran, the Iranian regime appears to be more firmly established than its rival, more representative of its people and in a better position to mobilize them.

At the same time, Iranian ascendancy over Iraq would threaten the entire regional *status quo*, something no regional or Western power would be willing to accept. First Iran and now Iraq benefitted from the tendency of the great powers to preserve the territorial integrity of both. Iran's immense size is added protection. Iraq has improved its defense capabilities over the course of the war, but its trump may be the disastrous implications an Iraqi defeat would have for the Arabian Peninsula, the region and the world as a whole.

Right now this deadlock can only be broken if the Iranian regime should feel secure enough to stop using the war as a major factor in mobilizing support for the revolution, and if Iraq can make concessions that will satisfy Iran. Neither seems likely in the near future. The death of Khomeini could trigger a new power struggle in Iran, while the Iraqis seem prepared to make some concessions but not to accept a change in the regime.

## Death Treated Differently

The political deadlock is compounded by a military stalemate, now a war of attrition in which men, materiel, economic potential and foreign reserves are being depleted. Here again Iran has an important advantage: while Tehran assumes full responsibility for the war against the "infidel" and the sacrifices this demands, Baghdad has sought to disguise the cost of the war by doing everything possible to keep the population from feeling its effects on a day to day level. With little confidence in popular support for "Saddam's Qadisiyya," the Iraqi regime attempts to maintain an absurdly normal atmosphere. Even death is treated differently. If Iran's fallen soldiers more or less successfully transcend it through Shi'i martyrdom, in Iraq the family of the deceased is compensated with "gifts" from the government.

This war is all the more tragic because of the abundant resources available to the protagonists to continue it. Somalia and Ethiopia, for example, could never have sustained such an effort. . . .

"All conflicts must eventually come to an end," says the Iraqi president. "This war will end on the day the Iranians understand they will never reach Baghdad." Saddam Hussein is probably right. The way the war is going, the stalemate could be broken if the Iraqi army continues to repel Iranian attacks and refrains from taking any new risks, forcing the Iranian effort to wind down and exhaust itself. Even without an official cease-fire, the situation might then return to the pre-war level, border incidents, sabotage and propaganda wars, with both sides unwilling to risk a new escalation. Attention could then be directed to repairing the enormous devastation of the war and

reinstating development projects. This is one possible direction that does not require any outside intervention.

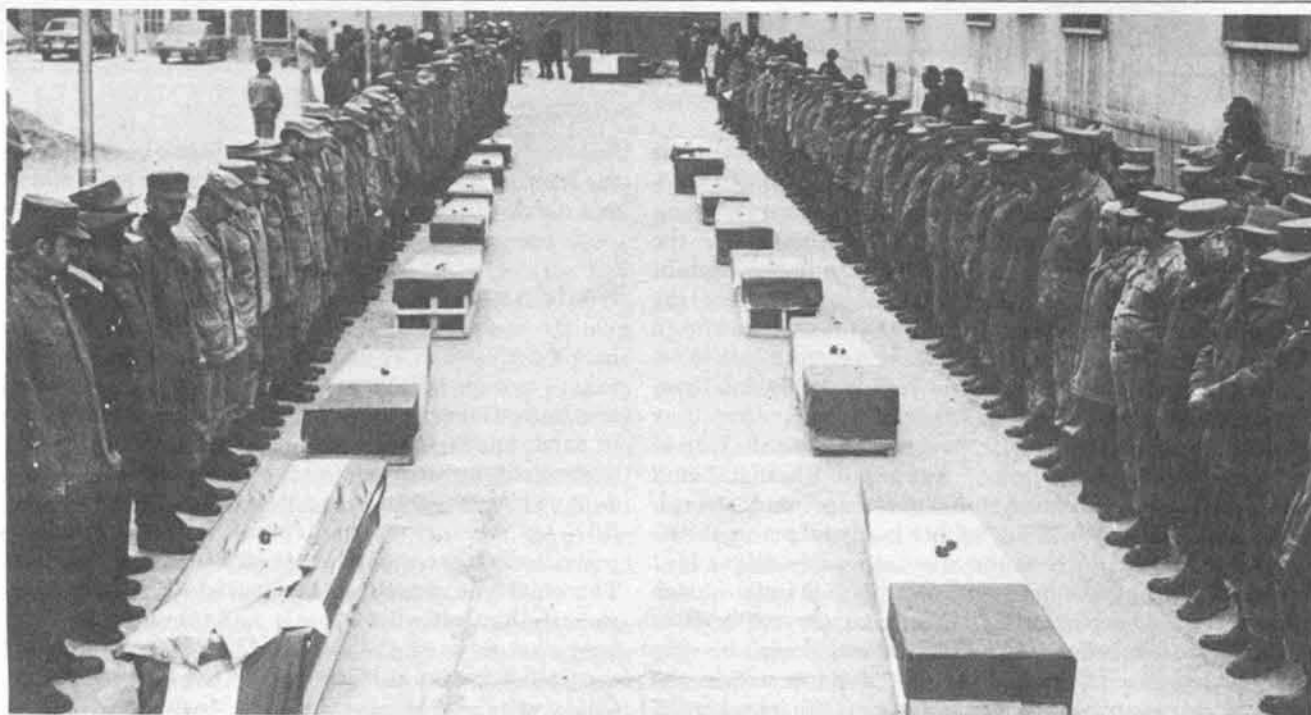
In any case, no solution is likely to be found outside the region, with or without Algerian mediation, with or without a Security Council resolution. A temporary solution would require several things: international observers along the border; possibly some financial compensation to both parties or at least affording them some advantage (such as production quotas or pricing) in an overstocked oil market; and full recognition by both sides that a military victory is impossible in the next two or three years. Aside from this, chances for a solution would be greatly improved if those responsible for this war on both sides were removed from power. But in order for this to succeed, the deposed individual or regime would have to be indirect victims of the war—that is, they would have to be replaced by their fellow citizens and not by foreigners.

For the time being then, Baghdad has clear air superiority and probably naval superiority as well, while Iran still holds the initiative on the ground. It is possible that this delicate balance will lead to a military stalemate and then perhaps to a political solution. This would require the strengthening of both regimes so that they could make peace without losing power. The leaders of both countries would also have to downplay their regional ambitions. If Iraq appears to have made this sacrifice, the same cannot be said for Iran. Western capitals cannot be expected to facilitate this process. The combination of ignorance, indifference, cynicism and opportunism that has frequently characterized their attitude toward the war is not conducive to a political solution, nor will it help to reestablish their own influence in the region. ■

—Translated by Diane James

Funeral in Tehran.

Ibrahim Shateri





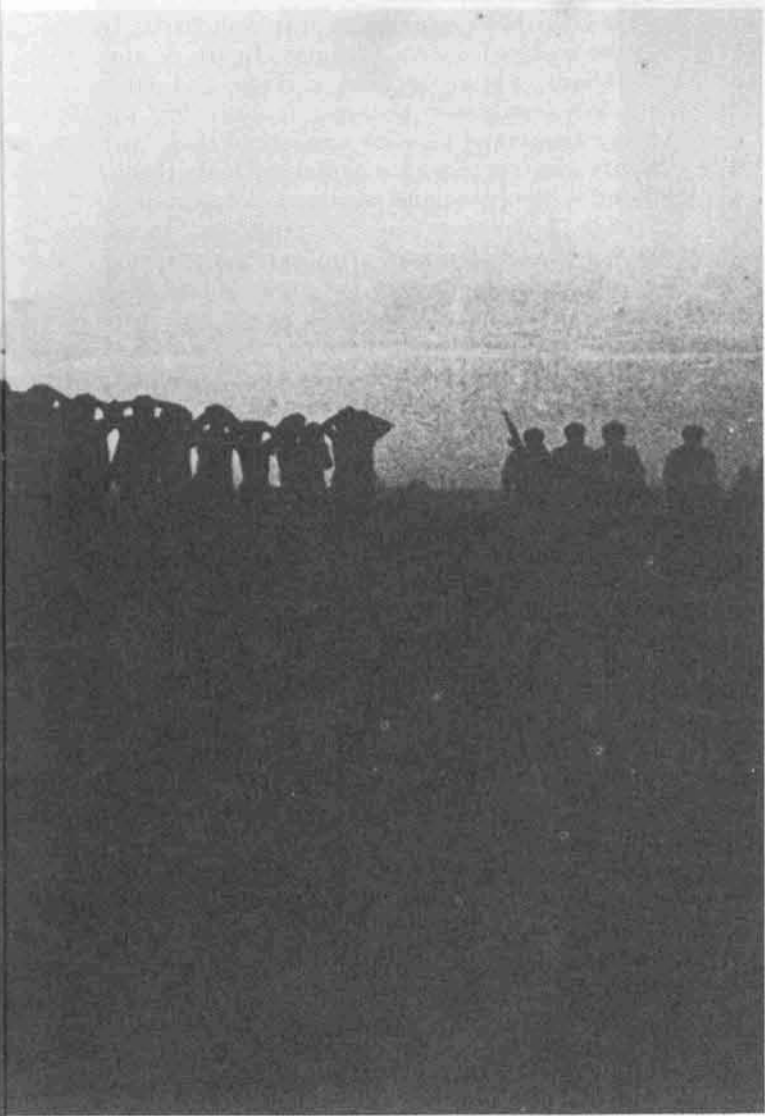


**O**stensibly, the war between Iraq and Iran is about boundaries, about freeing the Shatt al-Arab from Persian occupation, about restoring the two Tumb islands and Abu Musa in the Gulf to the Arab nation, and—admittedly always a more distant prospect—liberating Khuzistan (“Arabistan”) from the alien yoke. In fact, Iraq’s decision to start the war in September 1980 was a gamble which, over the last three and a half years, has tragically and horribly misfired. Saddam Hussein and his colleagues thought that they could take advantage of the apparent chaos within Iran to overthrow the government of Ayatollah Khomeini and install in its place a regime more “moderate” and “acceptable” to the ruling families of the peninsula and to the Western powers. Such a move would have the added purpose of stifling the potentially dangerous Shi’i opposition which had been growing within Iraq, especially since the Iranian revolution of 1978-79. It would also elevate Saddam Hussein to a position of leadership within the Arab world. Instead, the Iraqi regime has found itself

fighting an apparently interminable war of attrition which the Iranians seem to have no obvious interest in bringing to a quick end.

### Saddam’s War

Iraq’s decision to go to war, and the course the war has taken, cannot be separated from the political ambitions and limitations of Saddam Hussein. Hussein’s presidency, in turn, has been shaped and defined by the war to an overwhelming degree. Saddam Hussein had been president of Iraq for little over a year when the war began; his fifth anniversary as undisputed leader of the republic precedes by just a month the fourth anniversary of the war. The president, moreover, has seized every opportunity to identify himself with the war and its outcome. From the very first days of the fighting he encouraged the state-controlled media to refer to the conflict as “Saddam’s Qadisiyya,” invoking the Arab Muslim victories of the



## Not Quite Armageddon: Impact of the War on Iraq

Marion Farouk-Sluglett,  
Peter Sluglett and Joe Stork

seventh century which led to the collapse of the Sassanid empire of Persia. His Iranian foes have contributed to this identification by specifying his removal and "punishment" as a non-negotiable condition for ending the war.

Saddam Hussein's leading role in Iraqi politics had begun long before his rise to the presidency in July 1979. The regime which he now heads and has made his own came to power in 1968. Ahmad Hassan al-Bakr, who was president for 11 years, served initially as the leading figure, but Saddam Hussein had emerged as the principal actor on the political stage by the middle of the 1970s, by which time he had become vice-president. All the other coup makers of 1968 except he and al-Bakr had either been demoted or eliminated.

The events of July 1979 form an important backdrop to the decision to go to war in September 1980. The key political institution in Iraq since 1968 has been the Revolutionary Command Council (RCC). The size and composition of this body varied over time, but the core remained small in number—around half a dozen men who headed

key security posts in the state apparatus and the Ba'th Party. On July 12, 1979, the secretary-general of the RCC was dismissed from the government and the party and arrested. On July 17, President al-Bakr resigned and transferred formal power to Saddam Hussein. On July 28, Saddam Hussein announced that he had uncovered a "plot" against himself and the regime, led from within the RCC itself. A special tribunal composed of seven RCC members began a six-day trial of 68 Ba'th Party members for "conspiring against the Party and the Revolution" on behalf of Syria. On August 7, the tribunal handed down 22 death sentences, 33 prison terms and 13 acquittals. The executions were carried out the next day in the presence of Saddam Hussein; those killed included five RCC colleagues and several long-time but inactive Ba'th Party foes who had been serving out prison terms for earlier "plots."

The consequence of this putsch was to eliminate potential rivals within the leading cadre of the Ba'th party and to concentrate further state and party power in the hands of Saddam Hussein and several close relatives and

associates. The new, much smaller RCC included Saddam Hussein's cousin, 'Adnan Khairallah, as defense minister and deputy commander of the armed forces, and a close companion from his underground days, Sa'doun Shakir, as interior minister. The two other influential men in Saddam's entourage are Tariq 'Aziz and Taha Yasin Ramadan, both from Mosul. 'Aziz handles most matters of foreign affairs and is regarded as the main ideologue of the regime's inner circle. Ramadan is in charge of the "Popular Army" and the military bureau of the party, and oversees key financial negotiations and decisions. These men stand or fall with Saddam Hussein; if he goes, they will almost certainly go with him.

The tendency towards centralization and concentration of power has been accompanied ideologically by the jettisoning of much of the "traditional" rhetoric of Ba'thism, particularly references to Arab unity and Arab socialism. In its place, the government has sedulously fostered a vast personality cult around the person of Saddam Hussein himself. Not only is the war called "Qadisiyyat Saddam." One of the most densely populated areas of Baghdad, Madina al-Thawra, built in the early 1960s by the government of 'Abd al-Karim Qasim, was renamed Madinat Saddam in October 1982.<sup>1</sup> In Baghdad, Saddam Hussein's picture has been visible on walls and on public buildings for the past five years. He can be heard and seen nightly on Baghdad radio and television, and his speeches fill the pages of *al-Thawra* and *al-Jumhuriyya*. Iraq's reversals on the battlefield have done nothing to lessen this campaign. In Basra, bombed-out shops are plastered with color posters hailing Saddam Hussein as "the second great conqueror of the Persian enemy."<sup>2</sup> Rather than compromise his position, it appears that the prospects of an Iranian victory have only helped him to consolidate his primacy, at least for the time being.

## State and Opposition

The Iraqi regime is well known for the severity with which it persecutes its domestic opponents. In a report which opposition organizations claim only presents the tip of the iceberg, Amnesty International said that it had the names of 520 people executed for political offenses between 1978 and 1983. Offenses for which the death penalty is prescribed include being a member of a party other than the Ba'th Party without revealing that fact; criticizing the conduct of the war; recruiting Ba'th Party members to another political party, and political activity other than the Ba'th Party by former members of the armed forces. That latter provision, which dates from July 1978, operates in the context of universal conscription: any ex-conscript—i.e., any healthy adult Iraqi male—"is liable to be sentenced to death for engaging in any political activity other than that of the Ba'th Party."<sup>3</sup> In addition to those who have been executed, thousands of Iraqis have either "disappeared" or are known to be in prison.

In addition, the regime has carried out a systematic policy of mass deportation and "relocation." Following an attempt on the life of Vice-Premier Tariq 'Aziz in March 1980, some 40,000 Shi'is—said to be of "Iranian origin"—were deported to Iran. This process has continued intermit-

tently ever since, with the result that there are now more than 100,000 Iraqi Shi'i refugees in Iran and Syria. In April 1980, the leading Iraqi Shi'i religious figure, Ayatollah Baqr al-Sadr, his sister Bint al-Huda and other members of their family were executed. In June 1980, the Revolutionary Command Council announced that "any Iranian family which is proved to be disloyal to the [Iraqi] revolution and to the homeland is subject to deportation, even if it holds the Iraqi nationality certificate." In the present conflict, those "Iranians" of military age are being separated from their families on the grounds that they might be conscripted into the Iranian army, and there have been reports of coffins deposited at the entrances of houses which are empty because the dead man's "Iranian" relatives have been deported. Another aspect of this campaign is the encouragement to Iraqis to divorce their "Iranian" wives. The RCC passed a resolution in April 1981 that: "Any Iraqi national who is married to a woman of Iranian origin is eligible for ID 4000 if he is a member of the armed forces or ID 2500 for civilians if he divorces his wife, or if she is deported."<sup>4</sup>

The regime does not have recourse to the deportation option to deal with another main source of opposition, the Kurdish national movement. Kurdish politics are complicated, and the various factions grievously divided. The regime seems to have thought that the Algiers agreement of 1975<sup>5</sup> had solved the "Kurdish question" once and for all. Nevertheless, the repressive measures which it adopted in carrying out its policies led to renewed clashes between the army and the Kurdish guerrillas in 1977. In 1978 and 1979, over 600 Kurdish villages reportedly were burned down and some 200,000 Kurds "relocated" in other parts of the country, as part of a scorched earth policy aimed at creating a *cordon sanitaire* some 12 miles deep and 500 miles long along the borders with Iran and Turkey. The University of Sulaimaniyya, the only institution of higher education in the area, was closed down in 1981; in the same year, the executions of nearly 200 Kurds were reported in Baghdad and Mosul. Fortunately for the Iraqi regime, their Iranian counterparts seem intent on pursuing as harsh a line as they themselves towards "their" Kurds.

In spite of the fact that the regime had been more or less under a state of siege for most of 1983, with Saddam Hussein choosing not to venture outside the presidential palace, its self-confidence does not seem to have been substantially shaken. Of course, the regime has so cowed the population with its enormous internal security forces, surveillance operations and the atrocious punishments which it metes out to opponents that the absence of expressed opposition cannot be taken to imply that the war, or the regime, are in any way "popular." Nearly 1.5 percent of the population (200,000 out of 14 million) have either been killed, wounded or captured, and the regime has had to resort in almost macabre fashion to a range of financial compensations for the families of those killed at the front.<sup>6</sup>

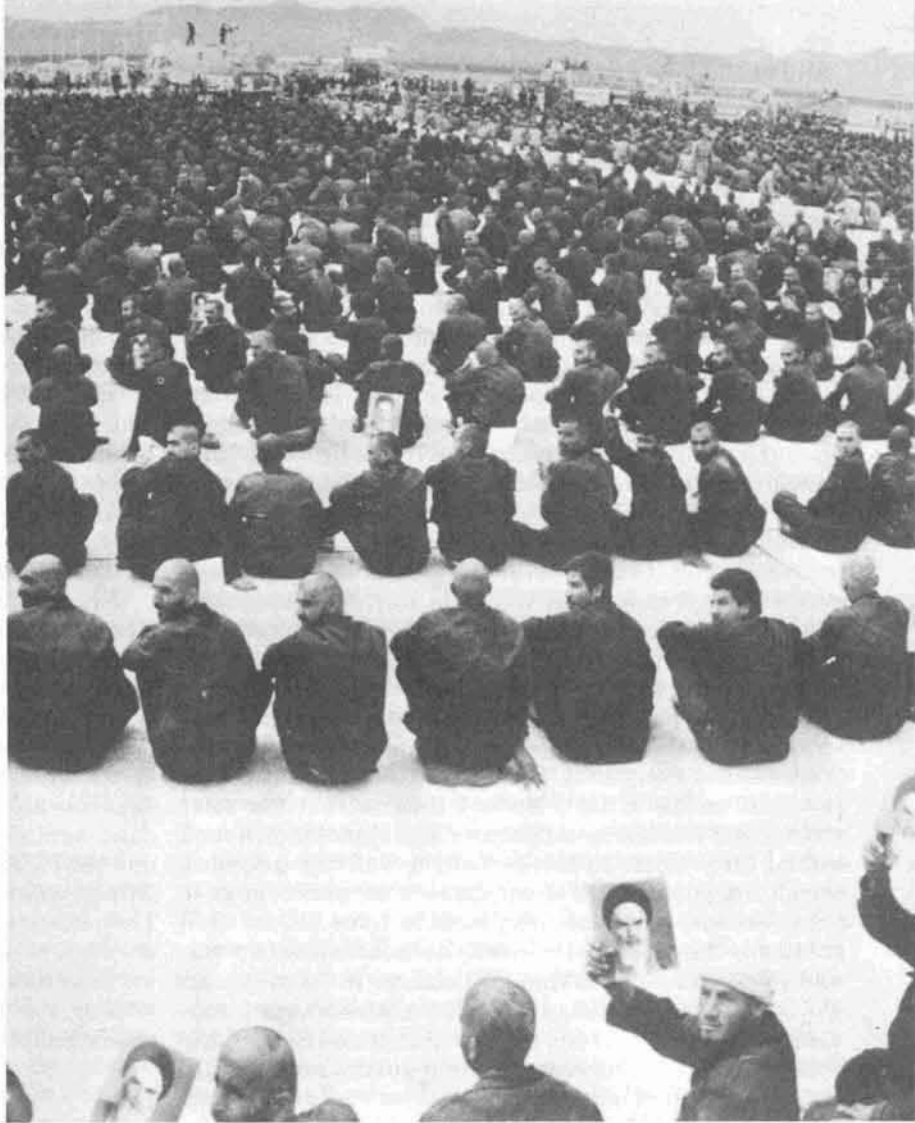
But it has been impossible for the regime to make the kind of spiritual, national and moral capital out of the conflict which its enemy has been able to utilize so effectively. In spite of a huge program of mosque construction<sup>7</sup> and the use of religious symbolism, the regime has not succeeded in elevating the struggle beyond the level of



survival.\* For most ordinary Iraqis, the war now seems to have developed into a desperate but essentially straightforward struggle for the preservation of Iraq rather than a campaign that can be "won" in any meaningful sense. Although it has certainly caused untold suffering and destruction on both human and material levels—the number of casualties means that virtually every family is affected to some extent—few outside the ranks of the most militant Shi'is would actually welcome the prospect of an Iranian victory. For all Saddam Hussein's cruelty and rapacity, it is very difficult for Tehran to persuade ordinary Iraqis that Khomeini's regime offers a more attractive alternative.

The only point at which signs of opposition from within the party appeared was in the spring of 1982, when Saddam Hussein was forced by the course of the battles to withdraw his troops from Iran and to prepare to meet an Iranian move into Iraq. Rumors abounded that Iraq's backers in the Gulf were preparing to meet Iranian demands for reparations and were encouraging Saddam Hussein to step aside in order to bring Iran to the negotiating table. Whatever the substance of these reports, Hussein used the Ba'th Party's ninth Regional Congress to reassert his unchallenged command. He dismissed the RCC and appointed a new, smaller one. He purged the cabinet and the senior officer corps. The former minister of health, Riyadh Ibrahim Hussein, was executed, apparently for suggesting that Saddam Hussein step down in favor of former president Ahmad Hassan al-Bakr. There is no way of gauging how serious this all was. In any event, state power remained firmly in the grip of Saddam Hussein and his main cohorts—Khairallah, Shakir, 'Aziz and Ramadan.

Some changes in the regime did occur in October of 1983, when Saddam Hussein dismissed his half-brother Barzan Takriti and several other Takritis from their positions. There followed predictable rumors of a coup attempt, but it seems that the significance of these moves lay elsewhere. The fact that Barzan was initially replaced as head of the *mukhabarat* by a popular and competent general suggested a new degree of political assertiveness on the part of the military leaders who resented Barzan's corruption and meddling.\* Perhaps the decisive factor, though, was Barzan's sponsorship of the renegade Palestinian terrorist Abu Nidal. This was at a time when Baghdad was actively seeking a decisive US "tilt" towards



Iraqi prisoners-of-war.  
Seifollah Samadian

Iraq in the war, and Washington insisted that disavowal of Abu Nidal was an essential precondition to any such move. Abu Nidal was reportedly expelled from Iraq shortly thereafter.\*

## The Shi'i Factor

One absence of opposition deserves some mention, considering its implications as to the nature of the "Islamic revival." Tehran's religious propaganda directed specifi-

\* One feature of Saddam Hussein's demagoguery which he shares with the Ayatollah is a fondness for invoking "an international Zionist conspiracy." "Had it not been for the noble Iraqi army," he declaimed in January 1983, "our land in this region would have been an arena of Persian, Zionist and foreign troops.... This war is... an international Zionist conspiracy aimed not only at Iraq but at the entire region." BBC Summary of World Broadcasts, January 8, 1983.

\*The general in question, Hisham Fakhri, was soon required back on the southern front, where he was in overall command of Iraqi forces. He was replaced as *mukhabarat* chief by Fadel al-Barrak, a Takriti from Saddam Hussein's tribe, and perhaps even from the president's village, al-'Auja. By mid-summer, General Fakhri had dropped from prominence, replaced as head of the Third Army by General Maher 'Abd al-Rashid. The new commander is a former head of army intelligence and does hail from Saddam Hussein's village, al-'Auja. Washington Post, July 30, 1984.

cally at the Shi'is who make up nearly 60 percent of the population seems to have had remarkably little impact. Iraqi Shi'i conscripts do not appear to have deserted in any numbers to join the ranks of their Iranian co-religionists.<sup>9</sup> Thus a major factor in Saddam Hussein's decision to invade Iran in the first place—the belief that Khomeini's ideology would find a widespread echo among Iraq's Shi'i masses—seems not to have been justified by events. A number of tentative conclusions suggest themselves. It may well be that the regime's propaganda has successfully identified "supporters of Khomeini" with "the enemies of Iraq," so that most of Khomeini's potential supporters have been alienated or isolated. In other words, Iraqi Shi'is unambiguously consider themselves Iraqis first and Shi'is second. Another factor is that the kind of Islamic society which has evolved in Iran seems to have little attraction for Iraqi Shi'is. Over a period in which the Middle East has experienced a resurgence of religiously-based political movements, it is ironical that this war, with its strong sectarian undercurrent, has revealed and highlighted a dominant Iraqi patriotism.

To this one must add several caveats, though. First, sectarianism has to some extent been overcome by a virulently racist campaign from Baghdad against everyone and everything "Persian." The hegemony of the state-run media in Iraqi society insures that the most vicious and ridiculous caricatures and slanders will long outlast the conflict on the battlefield, and has helped to poison the possibilities of coexistence for generations to come. Second, although Iraq's Shi'is have proven that politically they are loyal citizens, the experience of the war and the social fissures that will emerge in its aftermath will probably heighten, at least at a personal and individual level, the divisions between Sunni and Shi'i Iraqis.

Third, the war between the Iraqi government and the underground Shi'i movement has not yet ended. The latest installment reaching the outside world occurred in the spring of 1983. In May, the government executed six leading Shi'i clergymen, all members of the al-Hakim family. Ayatollah Mohsen al-Hakim, who died in 1970, had been a leading scholar in Iraq's Shi'i community. Mohammed Bakr al-Hakim, his son, has been the most prominent collaborator with the Iranians. He has been living in Iran and agitating from there on behalf of the Islamic Republic. He is the head of the Tehran-based Supreme Assembly of the Islamic Revolution in Iraq (SAIRI), which has since established a presence in Haj Omran, an Iraqi garrison town on the northern front which Iran occupied in the summer of 1983. (His activities reportedly include touring POW camps in Iran to urge captured Iraqi soldiers—many of them Shi'is from the so-called Popular Army—to volunteer to help overthrow Saddam Hussein.)<sup>10</sup> According to one account of the executions, the Iraqi government invited leading clergymen from Najaf to attend a Ba'thi sponsored conference on Islam in Baghdad in April. Most, including those in the al-Hakim family, and another leading figure, Ayatollah Khoyi, refused. One month later, the government arrested 90 members of the al-Hakim family, ranging in age from 9 to 76. The six, including three brothers of Mohammed Bakr, were hanged on May 20, in front of their relatives. One relative was released from prison to carry the message

to Mohammed Bakr al-Hakim in Tehran that more would die if he did not halt his propaganda. Ayatollah Khoyi was reported under virtual house arrest in Najaf, his telephone links to the outside world cut off.<sup>11</sup>

The situation on the Kurdish front is considerably more complicated. Iran and Iraq have been supporting Kurdish insurgents in each other's territory while pressing the military campaign against their own Kurds. Iraq, for instance, has supported the Kurdish Democratic Party of Iran under 'Abd ul-Rahman Qassemlu. Iran has supported the Barzani-led Kurdish Democratic Party of Iraq. The major Iraqi Kurdish faction opposed to the Barzanis, the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan (PUK) of Jalal Talabani, has conducted intermittent negotiations with Baghdad for at least the past year. A cease-fire between the government and the PUK went into effect in December 1983, but the expected January 1 announcement of a government of national reconciliation never occurred.

Negotiations with the PUK broke down in January when 16 Kurds—11 of them PUK members—were executed by firing squad for desertion from the armed forces. Sulaimaniyya, where the executions took place, was the site two months later, in March 1984, of large demonstrations against conscription into the Popular Army and better terms for Kurdish deserters.\* Troops fired on the demonstrators, killing three. PUK-led negotiations broke down again when the government attacked a second rally, and the PUK responded with a raid on an army garrison. Unrest was also reported in a second Kurdish city, Arbil. The current state of relations between the government and the PUK is not known, although negotiations apparently are continuing at some level.<sup>12</sup> The KDP of the Barzanis, meanwhile, is reportedly operating out of an Iranian-sponsored base in Haj Omran.<sup>13</sup>

## Opposition to the War

One reason that opposition to the war and to the regime generally has been so muted is the divisiveness among the major opposition groupings—communists, Kurds and Shi'is. The opposition front formed in Damascus around the Iraqi Communist Party includes neither the PUK nor the KDP, and the Iranian experience has patently underscored the limitations of any alliance of communists and fundamentalist Shi'is. At a popular level, the main grounds of opposition to the government revolve around the war itself, but wartime conditions leave any organized opposition vulnerable to charges of treachery. Whatever difficulties Iraq had been experiencing prior to the war, there was nothing on the scale of the socioeconomic crisis that beset Iran and laid the groundwork for the revolutionary movement there.

\* These demonstrations were apparently not organized by the PUK, and in fact it seems that the PUK has largely been cooperating with the government to control the area. This at least is the charge of Iraqi expatriates supporting the uprising.

Isolated incidents such as car-bombings occurred sporadically during the war. The most serious apparently was the truck-bombing of the Ministry of Planning in August 1982, which killed 69 and injured many more. There has been at least one reported assassination attempt against Saddam Hussein, in the town of al-Dujayl in July 1982; parts of the town were razed in collective reprisal.<sup>14</sup> The president, who made well-publicized visits to the front and to the countryside in the first years of the war, grew uncharacteristically reclusive in the summer and fall of 1983, no more the latter-day Harun al-Rashid, even foregoing events like the 15th anniversary of the 1968 coup which brought the regime to power.<sup>15</sup>

There is no doubt that this war has hurt Iraq badly, and that its attrition has been political as well as economic. On at least one day last spring, an observer counted more than 60 coffins in an hour move through the Imam Ali mosque in Najaf. By all accounts signs of war and deprivation are relatively few in Baghdad and most other parts of the country removed from the front lines. Basra is the major exception. Officially the city still has 300,000 inhabitants, and no one has fled. Yet empty houses can be seen everywhere, and more than half the shops appear closed. Government offices and establishments like banks are fully staffed; employees there reportedly have been told that if they miss more than three consecutive days of work they will lose their jobs.<sup>16</sup>

There are some signs that opposition to conscription—not just among Kurds—may be a growing problem. In early March 1984, armed militiamen reportedly sealed off several Baghdad working-class districts and went about “recruiting” young men for the so-called Popular Army, which now numbers around 400,000. The Popular Army’s assignments usually involve protecting various installations and strategic sites around the country, freeing up the regular army for combat. About one-quarter of the Popular Army, though, are now reportedly backing up regular units at the front.<sup>17</sup> Desertion seems to be a problem among the regular units as well. The road from Basra to Baghdad is studded with military checkpoints, officially looking for terrorists and Iranian infiltrators. But the military police check only the papers of draft-age Iraqis. Witnesses report more than one occasion when young men fleeing a checkpoint on foot have simply been cut down by machine-gun fire. Basra’s cabarets are frequently raided by police looking for deserters seeking anonymity in the dimly-lit clubs.<sup>18</sup> In 1983 the RCC issued a decree forbidding companies from hiring deserters or draft-dodgers. For private firms, the penalty is state seizure of the company.<sup>19</sup>

## Social and Economic Consequences

Iraq’s war strategy was keyed to insulate Iraqi society from the war as much as possible by minimizing casualties and by maintaining civilian development projects, subsidies and imports at a positively lavish level. The first element proved to be a military handicap, in that it contributed to Iraq’s failure to move decisively to seize key objectives in the opening weeks of the war. The second element could only be sustained as long as it could be financed. On the assumption that the war would be short, the government

drew down its accumulated foreign exchange reserves from an estimated \$35 billion to perhaps as low as \$2 billion by early 1983. It received an additional \$25 billion or so from its Gulf allies, mainly Saudi Arabia and Kuwait, in the first two years of the war. In 1981, the country actually increased its non-military imports by \$5 billion, although oil exports and revenues had dropped to less than half their pre-war levels. This meant that Iraq was running a trade deficit of nearly \$10 billion during the first full year of the war.

This “guns and butter” policy began to change in the spring of 1982. The war was not going well, as Iraqi troops were forced to retreat back across the border. The economic consequences were compounded by Syria’s decision to close the Baniyas oil pipeline, thus further reducing Iraq’s export earnings. Saddam Hussein’s first public call for austerity came on April 11, the day after the Syrian move. This was not immediately translated into spending reductions, however. The investment budget remained at the previous year’s level of \$23.6 billion. In early 1982 the government was still rushing construction projects in preparation for hosting the Non-Aligned Conference scheduled for that September. (The mayorality of Baghdad spent \$7 billion to refurbish the city during the first two years of the war.)<sup>20</sup> It was not until the fall of 1982 that the government took concrete steps reflecting the severity of the economic crisis it faced. It devalued the currency by five percent, reduced the percentage of their salary that foreign workers could convert from dinars to hard currencies from 75 to 50 percent and trimmed allowable remittances for over one million Egyptian and other Arab workers in the private sector from ID 1,000 to ID 700 per year. Foreign companies reported slowdowns in payments and delays in final acceptance of contracts, as all hard currency expenditures were routed through the labyrinth bureaucracy of the Central Bank. The trade deficit for 1982 was



Source: US Department of State



down only slightly over the previous year, to just over \$7 billion, as contracted development projects fell from \$20.1 billion to \$4 billion.

As Iraq moved into 1983, its financial problems were heightened by the decline in "loans" from its Gulf allies, which had been running at an estimated \$1 billion a month. This partly reflected those states' own attempts to cope with the decline of oil exports and revenues of that period, and partly their unhappiness with the prospect of subsidizing Saddam Hussein's unimpressive military adventure for the indefinite future. This made 1983 a year of "fragile economic equilibrium," to use the diplomatic phrasing of the US interests section in Baghdad.<sup>21</sup> State organizations fell increasingly behind in payments to foreign contractors, and prospective contractors and exporters were required to secure their own financing. Week after week the Western economic press repeated foreign contractors' tales of woe and hard times. Those with the most "exposure" in Iraq were the French, West Germans and Japanese. In many cases those governments stepped in with guaranteed credits, banking politically on the survival of the regime. Payments were deferred and rescheduled into 1985. Arab contractors, who could not resort to credits or guarantees from their governments, were reported to be "flooding" Arab and international banks based in the Gulf to secure financing for their Iraq projects. Their search was largely in vain, despite guarantees from the Iraqi central bank.<sup>22</sup> The major international banks apparently held a similar opinion of Iraqi creditworthiness: when Iraq tried to raise a \$500 million Eurodollar loan in the fall of 1982, five of the eight lead managers ended up being Arab banks.<sup>23</sup>

Though statistics are not available, it appears that Iraq was able to reduce its deficit in 1983 to between \$2 and \$3 billion. The conventional estimate is that the war is costing \$1 billion a month, a very rough order of magnitude at best. The figure is no doubt lower during periods of relative lull, and probably quite a bit higher during major offensives. The government still makes lump sum payments to the families of those killed in the war, though the amount has apparently decreased considerably, to around \$2,000 now. Relatives also receive free new cars, small plots of land and interest-free or very low interest loans for building.<sup>24</sup>

It is difficult to specify Iraq's present economic state. Initial cutbacks of imports were presumably cushioned by stocks on hand; these have now been depleted. Shortages of a number of basic commodities have been reported by many observers, though many items are still plentiful. As one Baghdad resident put it recently, "One day it's coffee, the next day it's eggs, but something is always missing." Visitors in the summer of 1983 reported long lines for gasoline at service stations guarded by armed soldiers.<sup>25</sup> Debts rescheduled earlier will start to come due this year. On the other hand, expansion of the oil pipeline through Turkey, expected to be completed this summer, will increase hard currency export earnings, and other oil export routes are being negotiated through Jordan and Saudi Arabia.

Other economic indicators are equally imprecise. Inflation has been estimated as high as 40 percent during earlier periods, but is now apparently in the 25 percent range.<sup>26</sup> For the first time since it came to power, the government

has been forced to raise revenues from the people. It seems to have approached this in the most gingerly fashion. Tax collection procedures have reportedly been tightened up, but at the same time many tax rates have been reduced.<sup>27</sup> New revenue schemes include a state lottery and legalized horse race betting. Duty-free shops and foreigners' supermarkets have been opened to anyone who can pay in foreign currency. In the summer of 1983, the government launched a campaign to solicit donations in cash, gold jewelry and volunteer overtime work. Deputy Prime Minister Ramadan called the donations a "referendum" on the government's performance. It seems to have been implemented in the unique democratic tradition of this regime: uniformed soldiers solicit from door to door, and lists of donors are read periodically over the state television to help motivate the recalcitrant. According to one account, "the ability to produce an official receipt for a large contribution is an important asset."<sup>28</sup> Another vehicle has been the sale of "Qadisiyyat Saddam" bonds to workers.<sup>29</sup> All of these devices seem to have netted the regime perhaps half a billion dollars in cash and some 4,000 kilograms of gold and jewelry.

## Labor Shortages

Of the various shortages that have accumulated from the war to handicap the Iraqi economy, the most significant and far-reaching has been shortages of labor, and skilled workers in particular. For more than a year, the large numbers of men at the front were disguised by many thousands of migrant workers from Egypt, other parts of the Arab world and Asia. In 1982, foreign firms were complaining that conscription of staff was hindering work. The large numbers of expatriate workers, though, represented a foreign exchange drain of about \$4 billion in workers' remittances. This was a major target of the government as it moved to implement its austerity programs in late 1982 and 1983. There was considerable attrition among foreign workers, as large construction and development projects were concluded or wound down after 1982. In the summer of 1983, 60 percent of the expatriate university faculties were dismissed. The government also lowered the percentage of migrant workers' wages that could be converted into foreign currencies. These restrictions gave additional impetus to the exodus of foreign workers. The number of Asian workers in Iraq fell by an estimated 50 percent in 1983, while the number of Egyptians—the largest group of foreign workers—declined an estimated 30 percent, mainly as a result of remittance restrictions.<sup>30</sup> The number of Egyptians now in Iraq seems to be around one million (including some 15,000 serving as "volunteers" in the Iraqi army). Early in 1983 Iraq negotiated an agreement with the government of the Philippines whereby some 60 percent of Filipino workers' wages would be in the form of a promissory note to the Marcos regime. There are about 38,000 Filipino workers in Iraq, the largest number of non-Arab

\* Another story reports that President Hussein's wife joined the campaign by "parting with heaps of valuables" on television. Rather than enhance the campaign, though, this display led to "widespread public questioning" about how the first couple, both of humble backgrounds, had managed to accumulate such an impressive stash of jewelry. *Christian Science Monitor*, August 3, 1983.

foreign workers, mainly in nursing and other medical and technical positions.<sup>31</sup>

Iraq's severe shortage of labor insures that the economy will depend on significant numbers of foreign workers for some time to come, since it "lacks the skilled manpower necessary to operate and maintain modern plants and facilities now being completed," and remittances "still probably exceed \$2 billion/year, a major burden when Iraq's hard currency earnings have fallen to \$7-8 billion/year."<sup>32</sup> Recent agreements with foreign contractors have apparently included recruitment of expatriate workers for jobs ranging from construction and operation of cement plants to cleaning the new Saddam Hussein International Airport and al-Shahid, the martyrs' monument in Baghdad.<sup>33</sup>

Another feature of Iraq's labor shortage has been the large-scale recruitment of Iraqi women into office and factory jobs. One British contractor observed in the summer of 1983 that young men had become extremely rare in government offices. "Nearly all experienced young men have been drafted," he said, "and have been replaced by well-qualified, but inexperienced, young women."<sup>34</sup> According to the General Union of Iraqi Women, women represented 19 percent of the industrial workforce in 1980, a proportion expected to reach 28 percent by 1985.<sup>35</sup> In one factory producing electric lamps, half of the 400 workers are now women, and half of the men are Chinese!<sup>36</sup> The Labor and Social Affairs Minister recently noted that his ministry was able to keep within its current budget, thanks to the volunteer labor of 32,000 women.<sup>37</sup>

One specific consequence of the various restrictions placed on converting foreign workers' remittances has been a flourishing black market in foreign currencies. The official rate of exchange is still \$3.10 per Iraqi dinar; the unofficial rate in the spring of 1984 was one dollar.\* In March 1984 there were reports that several bank officials had been executed for currency manipulation in the course of an anti-corruption drive.<sup>38</sup>

## The Private Sector

The Ba'th regime's depiction of itself as socialist confuses the dominant economic role of the state with the relations of various classes to the means of production. A survey of the period between 1963 and 1978 shows the continuing vitality of the private sector in agriculture, industry and services, particularly in transport and construction. The nationalization of oil in 1972, which took the country's principal resource out of the hands of "imperialist monopolies" and put it under the full control of the national government, has also had wide-ranging political as well as economic consequences. In particular, it has facilitated the Ba'th Party's drive to concentrate power exclusively in its own hands. Within five years (1973-78), the state's income from oil rose almost tenfold: by 1976, the contribution of crude oil to total revenues had risen to 87 percent. Thus the state, which for most practical purposes was completely in

the hands of Saddam Hussein, emerged more emphatically than ever as the principal focus, and principal agent, of capital accumulation.<sup>39</sup>

It was at this stage, particularly after 1977, that the rift developed between the Ba'th and the Communists, with whom they had been in uneasy alliance since 1971. Following closely on the regime's agreement with Iran in 1975, which effectively broke the back of the Kurdish resistance and thus lessened the Ba'th's dependence on other political allies, the huge increases in oil revenues facilitated a great enlargement of the Ba'th's power. Potential opposition could either be fiercely repressed—as with the Communists, the Shi'i opposition groups and the Kurds—or, far more easily, bought off with wage and salary increases, very low cost loans for land and housing, scholarships in Iraq and abroad and, particularly important, constant improvements in pay and working conditions for the military and security services.

The regime could finance this political base-building thanks to the almost unlimited funds available for all kinds of educational, welfare, industrial and other capital projects. Although the benefits of oil revenues were far from equally distributed—the poorer quarters of Baghdad suffered from housing shortages and poor transportation services, and the situation in the countryside was substantially inferior to that in the cities—there is little evidence of any widespread economic discontent in the period before September 1980.\*

In fact, the regime's policies, by accident or design, have tended not only to blunt the edge of potential opposition but also, as 'Isam al-Khafaji has shown, to facilitate the emergence of significant new social groups with vested interests in the maintenance of the political and economic system.\*\* Such groups are active participants in the economy, and are by no means restricted to the "bureaucracy," even in the broadest sense of the term.<sup>40</sup> Thus economic opportunities burgeoned initially in the construction and services sectors,<sup>41</sup> particularly in the interstices of large development projects involving foreign firms, where local contractors and subcontractors were able to play important intermediary roles. In general terms, the private sector was expanding at least at the same rate as the public sector until 1978, the last year for which full national statistical tables are available.<sup>42</sup>

Although official statistics are not available to chart developments since the war broke out, all signs are that this tendency has continued unabated. As of 1981, according to the Iraqi Federation of Industries, half the firms and 57 percent of invested capital in the private sector were in construction and associated industries; 20 percent of invested capital was in food industries, with textiles, leather and printing industries following in that order.<sup>43</sup>

What seems to have changed under the impact of the war, and with the encouragement of the government, is a shift from quick return investments in property and real estate to light and medium industries. The government

\* According to one Iraqi opposition source, an earlier factor in Iraq's currency decline was the large export of currency to Kuwait by senior Ba'thi officials following Iraq's battlefield reversals in the spring and summer of 1982. *Middle East Currents*, October 26, 1982.

\*\* See the review by Marion Farouk-Sluglett elsewhere in this issue.

decreed a revised industrial investment law in December 1982 (Law 113 of 1982) raising the dinar ceilings for private sector investments and increasing tax benefits, particularly for joint stock companies. Mixed-sector companies reportedly achieved record production figures in 1983.<sup>44</sup> One factor no doubt was the cutback in non-essential imports as a result of the financial strains caused by the war, placing more reliance on local production of consumer durables, other commodities, and services. At the beginning of 1984, the government announced that budget allocations for the private industrial and trade sectors would increase by 171 percent. "We believe this increase will play a positive role in the development of the private sector's participation in the process of production of essential commodities," said Trade Minister Hassan Ali.<sup>45</sup>

Ali also stated that in December the government had signed 300 contracts with private Iraqi and other Arab firms to invest in agricultural development. This attention reflects the rather dismal performance of the agricultural sector in recent years, when increasing yields per hectare have been offset by declines in total cultivated area. Food imports account for an estimated 15 percent of total imports.<sup>46</sup> Private holdings have always been a prominent feature of Iraq's agrarian reform experience. Over half of all holdings were privately owned in 1973, and much of the remainder rented. In the last few years, between 70 and 80 percent of the loans provided through the Ministry of Agriculture and Agrarian Reform went to private interests. Law number 35 of 1983 permits leases of up to 4,000 hectares to private individuals.

This emphasis on the private sector has not been confined to the realm of production. Farmers no longer are required to belong to or to market through agricultural cooperatives or state farms. They are now allowed to sell direct to public sector or private wholesale markets. As of June 1983, 80 percent of the wholesale markets in Baghdad had been leased to private traders.<sup>47</sup> Late in 1983 the government issued licenses to private merchants authorizing them to import food products up to \$16,000 worth each.<sup>48</sup>

In the services sector, one area where the government has encouraged "privatization" is in health care. According to one recent report, "treatment is already available—to those with the money—from several private hospitals and clinics, and more incentives have recently been introduced for private-sector health care."<sup>49</sup> Law number 25 of 1984 allows groups of at least four doctors with a minimum of 15 years experience each in the public sector to

set up private hospitals eligible for government-backed loans of up to \$1.6 million, free land title and three years' income tax exemption. By one account, the government is not so much initiating a new direction as recognizing that private medical practice is thriving, to the point where "90 percent of doctors moonlight and earn enormous fees in private practice."<sup>50</sup>

## The War in Perspective

Iraq's wartime experience in the economic sphere, as in the political sphere, seems to have accentuated certain basic tendencies that had become apparent in Iraqi society prior to 1980. The same can be said of Iraq's foreign policy, both in the region and internationally. Iraq's increased dependence on the financial favors of its Gulf neighbors will outlast the war, as will its reliance on the Western industrial states—France, Germany, Japan and the US—to help reconstruct and expand the country's economic infrastructure. This in turn will most likely continue to be reflected in Baghdad's accommodating "moderation" on issues like Israel and Palestine as well as other regional questions. In virtually every respect, this war has had the effect of integrating Iraq more inextricably into the world market, increasing its dependence on both its richer Arab neighbors and its major trading partners of the West (and Far East). In much the same way that Anwar Sadat's *infitah* can be traced to the years before Nasser's death, so too Iraq's position after nearly four bloody years of war, destruction and unprecedented carnage represents an acceleration of trends and tendencies that had become apparent at least as far back as a decade ago.

The regime's continued hold on state power will depend crucially on the outcome of the ground war. To this point, Saddam Hussein, like his adversary in Iran, has used the war to solidify his base and enhance his legitimacy. It is difficult now to anticipate the possible medium and long-term consequences of the war for Iraqi society, except to observe that it has been a profound and traumatic watershed in the evolution of that country, the repercussions of which will be felt for years to come. ■

\* All of this leads us to speculate on the prospective title of Professor Majid Khadduri's next installment of his running political chronicle: will *Free Enterprise Iraq* succeed *Socialist Iraq* as Saddam Hussein takes his place as the Pinochet of the Arab world?

## FOOTNOTES

<sup>1</sup> *Middle East Economic Digest (MEED)*, October 22, 1982.

<sup>2</sup> *Philadelphia Inquirer*, March 11, 1984.

<sup>3</sup> Amnesty International, *Report and Recommendations of an Amnesty International Mission to the Government of the Republic of Iraq, 22-28 January 1983* (London, 1983), p. 21.

<sup>4</sup> *Middle East Currents* (London), January 6, 1982.

<sup>5</sup> The treaty is reproduced as Appendix E in Majid Khadduri, *Socialist Iraq: A Study in Iraqi Politics since 1968* (Washington, 1978).

<sup>6</sup> *Arab Economist* (May 1982).

<sup>7</sup> Especially in Najaf and Karbala; see *MEED*, April 9, 1982.

<sup>8</sup> *The Guardian* (London), November 24, 1983.

<sup>9</sup> *Al-Rafidain*, an opposition newspaper published in London, reported that 25 young men were executed in

Baghdad and 150 in Falluja for refusing to go to the front. February 25 and March 23, 1984.

<sup>10</sup> *Newsweek*, August 22, 1983.

<sup>11</sup> *The Guardian* (London), June 28, 1983.

<sup>12</sup> *Ibid.*, December 29, 1983; March 16 and May 24, 1984.

<sup>13</sup> *Washington Post (WP)*, March 27, 1984.

<sup>14</sup> *The Economist*, January 29, 1983.

<sup>15</sup> *Newsweek*, August 15, 1983; *The Guardian* (London), November 7, 1983.

<sup>16</sup> *Philadelphia Inquirer*, March 20, 1984.

<sup>17</sup> *Le Monde*, translated in *Manchester Guardian Weekly (MGW)*, April 29, 1984.

<sup>18</sup> *Philadelphia Inquirer*, April 1, 1984.

<sup>19</sup> *MEED*, April 29, 1983.

<sup>20</sup> *Foreign Economic Trends (FET)*, February 1983. This

report is prepared annually by the US interests section in Baghdad and published as part of an International Marketing Information Series by the US Commerce Department. The 1984 edition incorrectly identifies the interests section as "American Embassy Baghdad."

<sup>21</sup> *FET*, April 1984.

<sup>22</sup> *MEED*, April 29, 1983.

<sup>23</sup> *Financial Times (FT)*, October 3, 1983.

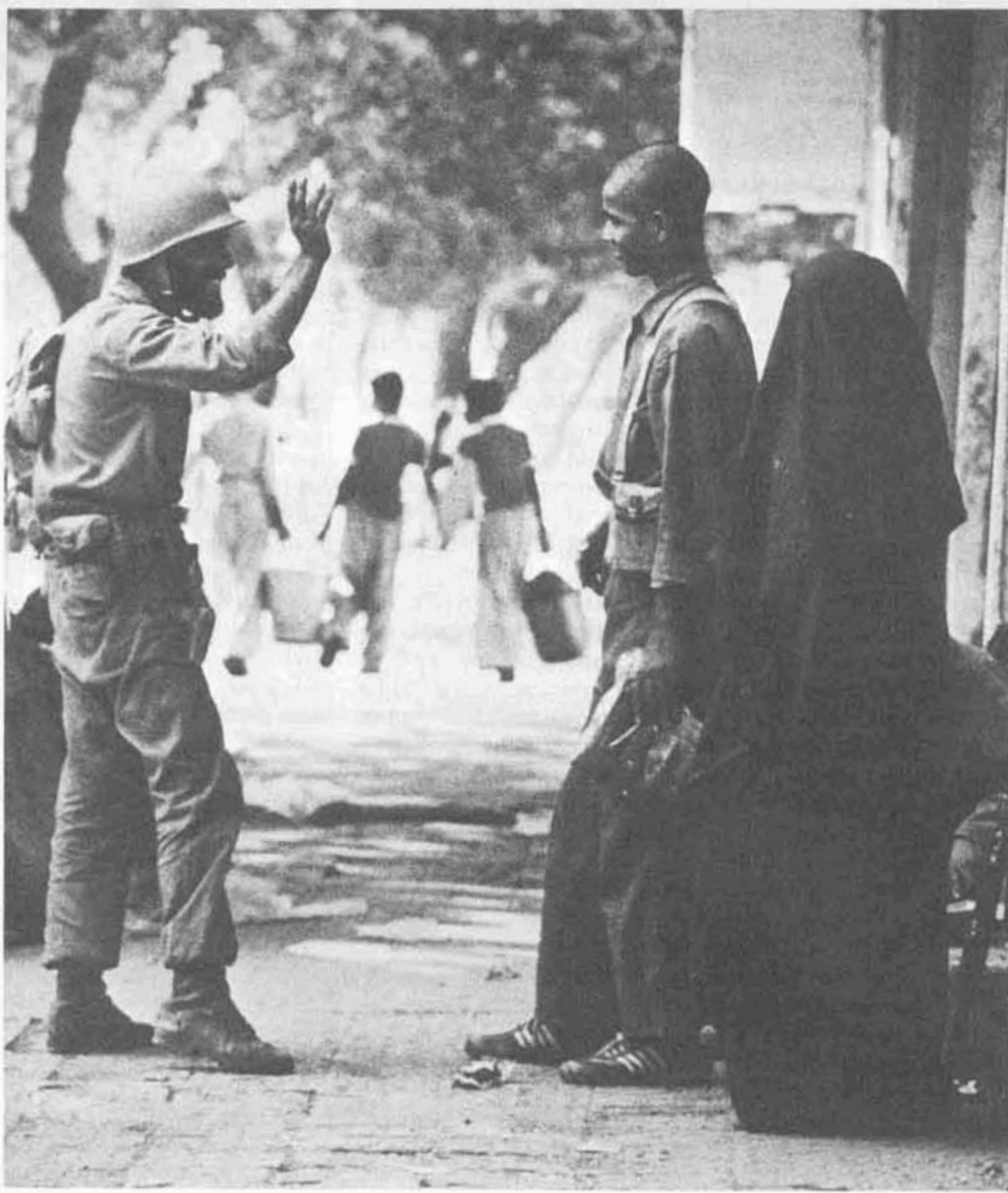
<sup>24</sup> *Le Monde*, translated in *MGW*, May 6, 1984; *The Middle East*, June 1984; *The Guardian* (London), January 6, 1984.

<sup>25</sup> *WP*, August 2, 1983.

<sup>26</sup> *FET*, April 1984.

See Slugletts, page 37





Iranian soldiers on a city street.

Mohsen Shandiz

# The Gulf War and The Islamic Republic

Eric Hooglund

**I**ran's war with Iraq has taken a devastating toll. There have been several hundred thousand Iranian casualties, including an estimated 180,000 deaths. Property damage amounts to billions of dollars. The conflict has uprooted at least 1.5 million civilians from the war zones and diverted the society's resources from socio-economic development into military expenditures.

While the human and material costs have been heavy, the effects of the war have not been entirely destructive, at

least from the perspective of the current government in Tehran. The war has served as a catalyst, helping the theocratic regime to consolidate its power. The Iranian clergy and their lay allies have used the Iraqi invasion to enlist popular acquiescence towards the new political institutions. At the economic level, the war has had only a limited impact on Iran's ability to export oil. Consequently, it has not seriously interfered with oil sales revenues. Perhaps the most important factor sustaining Iran's con-

tinued prosecution of the war has been the steady source of income Tehran could use both to pursue the war and to co-opt its citizens with various subsidies and incentives.

## Resolving Power

When Iraq launched its invasion in the autumn of 1980, the activists of the 1978-1979 popular revolution were preoccupied with resolving the question of who should be the legitimate inheritors of political power. By 1980, five broad ideological orientations were in contention for dominance. The most important grouped together advocates of a theocratic government. They had succeeded in drafting a new republican constitution, approved in a popular referendum in December 1979, that invested ultimate authority in a supreme religious jurist, or *faqih*. This constitution gave the Shi'i clergy effective political power. Not all of the clergy supported the concept of clerical political activism, but Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini did; his endorsement provided the constitution with an aura of legitimacy. The Islamic Republican Party (IRP) developed into an effective political organization comprising clerics—primarily junior men who were preachers rather than scholars—and lay political activists who envisaged a government guided by Islamic principles as interpreted by men with training in Shi'i religious law. The leaders of the IRP had acquired experience in mobilizing large crowds for demonstrations during the revolution and utilized their skills to marshal popular support for the new constitution and other IRP policies.

A second ideological current was secularist—those who believed that the clergy should not be involved in government. Advocates of this view included influential *ulema* such as the Grand Ayatollahs Shariatmadari and Qummi and Ayatollahs Mahallati and Zanjani, and thoroughly secular-minded persons such as Hedayat Matin-Daftari. The secularists were convinced that the revolution had been both necessary and positive but they were apprehensive about the objectives of the IRP. They opposed the new constitution because of its articles relating to the role of the clergy and out of concern that civil liberties and human rights were not adequately guaranteed. The secularists were divided into several political parties, all operating more or less clandestinely by the summer of 1980.

Leftist ideologies represented a third force in post-revolutionary Iran. Marxist ideas had been influential among Iran's educated youth since the early 1940s. Several political parties which were avowedly Marxist, or consciously borrowed Marxist concepts, openly recruited for new members after the revolution. The oldest of these parties was the Tudeh, originally established in 1941. The Tudeh had decided to work within the new constitutional arrangements because party leaders believed that the clerical leaders, especially those allied with the IRP, were objectively opposed to imperialism and comprador capitalism. The Tudeh's tolerant attitude toward the evolving theocracy may have been one reason for its inability to inspire widespread popular interest in its programs. A Marxist party with more appeal, at least among the educated youth, was the Fedayin. This party was deeply divided, however, over the issue of whether to cooperate

with or to oppose the new clerical government. In June 1980, it had split into a majority faction willing to support the Tudeh position and a minority faction opposed to clerical rule.

None of the Marxist parties attracted the attention of the public, especially the youth, like the Mujahidin-i-Khalq. The Mujahidin identified itself as a progressive Islamic party incorporating many Marxist ideas into its own ideology and recognizing Marxism as a progressive force.<sup>1</sup> The Mujahidin was the main organized opposition to the IRP by mid-1980. There had already been violent confrontations between supporters of the two rival parties in numerous cities and towns, and it is likely that the outbreak of the war with Iraq only postponed the bloody showdown between them.

A fourth ideological force, for regional autonomy, was based primarily among Iran's ethnic minorities—the Arabs, Azerbaijani Turks, Baluchis, Kurds, Qashghai Turks, and Turkomans. Supporters of greater freedom from central government control had been active among all these groups after the revolution. Among the Kurds, especially, who number approximately 2 to 2.5 million and live in the western mountains adjacent to Iraqi and Turkish Kurdish areas, there was widespread resentment of Tehran. Local Kurdish activists had assumed control of their cities and towns in the spring of 1979 and had expelled non-Kurdish government officials. In response, the Provisional Government dispatched the Revolutionary Guards to Kurdistan to suppress the incipient rebellion. Thus the war in Kurdistan was already in its thirteenth month when the war with Iraq broke out. Two Kurdish political parties, the Democratic Party of Kurdistan and the Komeleh, had organized fighting forces to oppose the Revolutionary Guards. In September 1980, the Kurdish fighters controlled most of rural Kurdistan, with the Revolutionary Guards confined to the provincial capital of Sanandaj and a few other towns.

A final ideological trend was monarchist. The popular nature of the revolution, plus the revelations of royal excesses under the shah published almost daily in the press in 1979-80, had widely discredited the idea of a monarchical restoration. The many formerly powerful Iranians whose only hope lay in a restoration were mostly in exile, and had not succeeded either in organizing support within Iran or in uniting around a single personality or party outside of the country.

## Theocratic Rivals

By mid-1980, the proponents of theocracy stood as the most powerful political force in the country, but they did not constitute a cohesive group. Their rivalries began to surface after the first Majlis under the new constitution had been elected and set about to choose a government. One key division revolved around alternative conceptions regarding the role of the clergy. Abol-Hassan Bani-Sadr, elected president of the republic in January 1980, advocated a more indirect political role for the clergy, while the Islamic Republican Party, led by Ayatollah Mohamad Beheshti, wanted clerics to fill important executive positions.

The war both intensified this dispute and served to delay its resolution. Initially, Bani-Sadr tried to use the war to demonstrate the necessity for filling government positions with technocrats rather than untrained clerics. His efforts only solidified the hostility of the IRP leaders; in June 1981, they succeeded in getting the Majlis to impeach and remove him from the presidency. Since that time, the IRP has dealt ruthlessly with its opposition and presented itself as the authoritative interpreter of Ayatollah Khomeini's ideas. Even though Khomeini has never become a formal member of the party, his consistent support of IRP policies has contributed significantly to the party's perceived legitimacy.

The elimination of Bani-Sadr was relatively easy because he failed to develop any effective political organization to articulate and support his views. The situation was different with respect to another source of opposition to direct clerical participation in government. The religious society known as the Hojatieh was originally supportive of the new constitutional arrangements, but Shaikh Mahmud Halabi and his Hojatieh followers became increasingly concerned after 1980 as the number of clerics in high policy-making positions expanded. The Hojatieh professed that, in the absence of the Shi'i Twelfth

Imam, the exercise of political rule was usurpation. They contended that the clergy must confine its role to that of providing religious guidance to the community of believers, and leave politics to laymen whose ignorance of religious doctrine made them more suitable to usurp the legitimate rights of the Hidden Imam. The Hojatieh's criticisms of clerical politicians coincided with the development of opposition, primarily from business interests, to IRP efforts to assert greater government control of the economy. In order to forestall the emergence of the Hojatieh as a catalyzing opposition force, the IRP launched a campaign against the society's "deviant" religious views during the summer and fall of 1983. Even Khomeini suggested indirectly but publicly that the positions of the Hojatieh were incorrect and harmful. Subsequently the Hojatieh decided to suspend its activities, presumably in order to avoid confrontations with IRP-organized street gangs.

Apart from dissent within the ranks of the supporters of theocracy, the IRP has confronted ideological opposition to the Islamic Republic. This has not diminished since 1980, but its effectiveness has been adversely affected by the war. The most serious challenge to the IRP had been posed by the Mujahadin. In June 1981, the Mujahidin seized upon

The family of a fallen soldier in Kashan.

Mahmoud Kalari





the impeachment of Bani-Sadr to initiate a campaign of armed rebellion against the IRP-dominated government. The Mujahidin claimed responsibility for several sensational bombings, including the one at IRP headquarters in June 1981 which killed Beheshti and more than 70 party leaders, and a bomb two months later which took the lives of the new president, Mohamed Ali Rajai, and Prime Minister Javad Bahonar. The government responded to the Mujahidin challenge with mass arrests and summary executions. An estimated 7,000 persons, mostly young people, are believed to have been killed in 1981-82.

## Fate of The Opposition

The severity of the government's reaction effectively eliminated as a serious internal opposition the Mujahidin as well as the Marxist Paykar and Fedayin (minority) parties which joined it in the armed struggle. While the Mujahidin does continue to operate underground cells in the country, and periodically claims responsibility for isolated bombings in Tehran and other cities, its primary role today is largely that of an external opposition force.

The reasons why the Mujahidin failed to secure popular support in its efforts to overthrow the clerical government in 1981-82 are very complex. Clearly one important factor was the war with Iraq. During the height of the Mujahidin uprising, Iraq still occupied approximately one-third of Khuzistan province, including the important city of Khorramshar; the city Abadan was besieged and in danger of being captured; and the cities of Ahvaz and Dizful were in range of Iraqi artillery guns. Thus, the Mujahidin's assault upon the government coincided with a grim phase of the war. This made it easy for the IRP to portray the Mujahidin as traitors and agents of foreign enemies at a time when popular anger against Iraq was high. The later willingness of the Mujahidin leader, Masoud Rajavi, to hold discussions with Iraqi officials provided Tehran with further propaganda against the Mujahidin.

Rajavi had escaped to France with Bani-Sadr in July 1981. Subsequently the two men formed the National Resistance Council to unite the external opposition to the IRP government. Predictably, given Bani-Sadr's lack of an effective organization to advance his own philosophy, the Mujahidin dominated the NRC, continuing its own publishing activities and recruiting among Iranian students in Europe and the US while Bani-Sadr was gradually reduced to a figurehead. The two men finally split in the spring of 1984, ostensibly over differences regarding the proper stance to adopt towards Iraq.<sup>2</sup>

The Marxist parties have not fared any better than the Mujahidin. The Tudeh and the Fedayin (majority) both agreed to continue supporting the government at the time of the Mujahidin uprising, and stuck to this position throughout the conflict. Only in the fall of 1982, long after the Mujahidin had been suppressed, did the Tudeh express cautious criticism of government policies, specifically the decision to take the war into Iraq. IRP anger over this, coupled with irritation over warming Soviet-Iraqi relations, triggered the IRP attack on the Tudeh. Many IRP

leaders had always believed that Tudeh cadres were nothing more than spies for the Soviet Union to begin with, and had never favored tolerating the Tudeh for expedient domestic or international policy reasons. In February 1983, the Tudeh secretary-general and more than two dozen other party leaders were arrested. In May, the Tudeh leaders were presented on television confessing that they were spies for the USSR. The party was disbanded by the government, more than 1,000 additional members were arrested, and all other Tudeh Party members were ordered to turn themselves in to the authorities.<sup>3</sup> In view of the conscious efforts of the Tudeh to work within the constitutional system and support the government, the severity of the IRP-ordered crackdown was unanticipated.

## The Kurdish Factor

The Kurdish struggle for regional autonomy also has been affected by the war with Iraq. Despite the fighting in the south, the government has launched several new offensives in the Kurdish areas since 1980. The Revolutionary Guards have captured all the principal towns and have contained the fighting to rural, mountainous areas. The government's relative success can be attributed to two factors. One is the inability of the Kurds to enlist support from non-Kurdish parts of Iran. While the Kurds have received some aid from the Mujahidin and two smaller Marxist parties, the country's Persian-speaking majority, as well as the largest ethnic minority, the Azerbaijani Turks, tend to be unsympathetic to the Kurdish cause.

The second factor is the inability of the Kurds to exploit the Gulf war on account of historical animosity between Iraq's Ba'th regime and the Kurdish national movement. Still, Iraq is the only practical source of supplies, since Turkey's government is as hostile to the concept of Kurdish local autonomy as is Tehran. The Iranian Kurds' natural allies, the Iraqi Kurds, were engaged in hostilities against Baghdad at least through December 1983. It is not clear whether the subsequent ceasefire between the Ba'th and Jalal Talabani's Patriotic Union of Kurdistan can help Iran's Kurds.<sup>4</sup> The effective control of the Iranian army and Revolutionary Guards over much of Kurdistan, including some strategic border passes, makes it unfeasible for Iraq, already defending long stretches of border in the south, to undertake any new offensives in support of Iran's Kurds. The complexity of the Kurdish situation has made it easy for the IRP to argue that the militant Kurds are traitors to their country. Few Iranians outside of Kurdistan question this line.

The other two ideological orientations opposing the IRP vision of Iran have been largely impotent since the war with Iraq began. The secularists, have neither a strong political party nor an effective leader. The secular leaders tend to reject armed struggle as an acceptable means for effecting political change. During the first two years of the war, most secularists—who also tend to be Iranian nationalists—deemed it inappropriate to oppose the government even in peaceful ways and stressed the need to maintain national unity in the face of foreign invasion and occupa-

tion. More recently this hesitation has been eroded owing to the Iranian military advances, and some secular leaders have been more willing to voice criticisms. Many of the secular political activists, moreover, now live in exile in Europe and the United States.

Supporters of a monarchical restoration do not have any organized movement within Iran. All existing pro-monarchy groups are based outside of the country, and any internal strength they may have has yet to be tested.<sup>5</sup> Monarchists do claim credit for a spontaneous demonstration in Tehran in the summer of 1983, on the anniversary of the granting of the first constitution in 1906. It is unclear whether the demonstrators were motivated more by a desire for a secular constitution rather than the Islamic one now in force, or for a return to a "constitutional monarchy." At any rate, there is little evidence of sympathy in Iran for any of the monarchist groups operating outside. This could be attributed partly to the division among the monarchists, although the groups are much less divided now than previously. More importantly, perhaps, some leading monarchists have openly collaborated with Iraq since 1980.

## Islamic Standards

The IRP has been generally successful, then, in exploiting the war against all its opposition.\* At the same time, it has demonstrated its ability to defend Iran from foreign aggression. In the process of mobilizing national solidarity for the war effort, the party has also been conscious of the neces-

sity to build and strengthen the institutions which will perpetuate clerical rule.

Thus the war has been used not simply to discredit opponents but also to broaden support for the theocracy. In practice, this has meant a thorough desecularization of society.<sup>6</sup> The legal system has been "Islamicized" with new criminal, civil, commercial, and moral codes prepared by Shi'i jurists. The educational system has been purged of teachers and students suspected of not being sufficiently Islamic, and textbooks continue to be revised to conform with religiously acceptable interpretations. All of the government ministries, the military, the Revolutionary Guards, the police, and other security forces now have special offices headed by clergymen who are responsible for ensuring that personnel comport themselves according to Islamic standards of acceptable behavior and demonstrate sufficient knowledge of Islamic doctrine and rituals. Participation in regular communal prayers and abstinence from alcoholic beverages, drugs and illicit sex are considered essential for proving one's Islamic worthiness.

## Challenge From The Military?

The IRP's success to date in maintaining its dominant political position has been facilitated by its control over the security forces. The war has been the primary factor in the expansion of both the regular and the irregular armed forces. By the summer of 1984, the total number of men serving as fighters for the Islamic Republic was estimated at half a million; approximately 185,000 were in the professional military—the army, air force and navy. Nearly the same number were in the Revolutionary Guards, and an estimated 150,000 were in the Basij-i Mostazafin (Mobilization of the Oppressed). Besides the IRP, these forces consti-

\*For further detail and first-hand accounts of the opposition movements, see the interviews and articles in "Khomeini and the Opposition," *MERIP Reports* no. 104 (March-April 1982) and "Iran Since the Revolution," *MERIP Reports* no. 113 (March-April 1983).



Members of the armed forces executed in July 1980 for conspiring to overthrow the regime: "33 coup makers and spreaders of corruption."

MERIPPhoto

tuted the primary organized—and armed—group within Iran and consequently were the focus of attention by both those who feared and those who hoped that they could serve as a potential source for a *coup d'état* against the government. The Army in particular has been perceived as the most likely locus of any serious challenge to the regime. In fact, since 1980 the government has announced that it has foiled several *coup* plots by army officers.\*

Several significant factors make it improbable that a successful *coup d'état* would originate within the army. First, the army has been purged of career officers whose loyalty to the present constitutional structure is suspect. Second, most of the current officer corps have advanced from junior ranks since 1979, and done so on the strength of their demonstrated loyalty to the IRP. Third, except for the career officers, the army is composed of young draftees thoroughly indoctrinated in the new religious and political values. Fourth, the IRP itself exercises direct ideological—and political—control over the army through a special office within the ministry of defense which assigns its own representatives—invariably Shi'i preachers—at all levels to monitor soldiers and ensure that they perform Islamic rituals and behave properly. Fifth, the army as an institution has demonstrated its fealty to the regime in power since February 1979, when the army command decided not to oppose the revolutionaries who had taken over the government.

## Meeting Needs

The creation of new governmental institutions and an effective security apparatus has preoccupied the IRP, but the stability of the regime also depends upon its ability to meet the material needs of the population. In this respect, the impact of the Gulf war upon the Iranian economy has been quite significant.

Initially, the war severely affected the economy. Khorramshahr, Iran's main port of entry for imports, was devastated and captured by Iraq; its largest refinery on Abadan Island was damaged too extensively to operate; a flood of more than a million refugees from the war zone placed a heavy strain on services. In 1980 Iran was still embroiled in the hostage affair and was just beginning to experience the effects of economic sanctions which the US and its European allies had imposed.<sup>7</sup> These sanctions, combined with the destruction of cargo in the customs warehouses of Khorramshahr, produced a shortage of foodstuffs and other consumer necessities. The government introduced a rationing system for many products, including meat, rice, dairy products, gasoline and heating oil. Operated out of the mosques, the system was reasonably efficient in ensuring that minimal supplies of essentials reached the majority of the urban population.

The resolution of the hostage crisis led to the lifting of international sanctions early in 1981. Smaller ports such as Lengeh, Bushehr, and Bandar Abbas, all farther down the Gulf and removed from the war zone, were expanded to

handle more ships,<sup>8</sup> while a brisk transshipment trade developed between Dubai in the UAE and ports along the Iranian coast. An increasing volume of imports were brought into the country via the overland route from Europe through Turkey. Smaller refineries were expanded to compensate for the lost production from Abadan and all petroleum exporting was centered on Kharg Island. As a consequence, Iran was able to reverse the initial setbacks caused by the war within two years. By the middle of 1982, in fact, the increased production and export of oil was earning the government more than \$1.5 billion monthly, and in 1983, oil revenues reached a record \$26 billion for the year.<sup>9</sup> The steady oil revenues in 1982 and 1983 enabled the government to prosecute the war, which cost more than \$1 billion per month, according to a late 1983 estimate. Simultaneously the regime maintained a minimal level of socioeconomic services and investment. Oil revenues have provided the principal source of foreign exchange needed to finance imports of weapons, food and other goods.

While the industrial sector does not appear to be producing at its pre-revolutionary levels, output in most factories reportedly has recovered from the low levels of 1979-81. The government itself has made major investments in key industries such as steel, copper and petroleum. There has also been an expansion of factories producing war-related goods. The high unemployment experienced by urban workers in the 1979-81 period has also been reduced, although the unemployment rate among adult male heads of household may still be as high as ten percent. Unemployment among youth is also lower than in the 1979-81 period, although this can partially be accounted for by the fact that an estimated 900,000 youths have been removed from the labor force temporarily or permanently due to the war.\*

Agriculture has not fared any better under the Islamic Republic than under the *ancien regime*.<sup>10</sup> Food purchases continue to represent a heavy burden on the import bill. During 1983, food imports cost an estimated \$4 billion. Despite the volume of imports, it has still been necessary to maintain a food rationing system, especially for meat, rice and dairy products. There are complaints about the rationing system: that the best quality foods get siphoned off into the black market; that hours must be spent each day in long lines; that local shops frequently run out of rationed products before all persons holding ration cards can make their purchases; and that an increasing variety of non-food consumer items are becoming subject to rationing.<sup>11</sup> Nevertheless, the system does operate despite these problems, and its main beneficiaries are the urban poor who have been able to obtain low-cost necessities which otherwise may have been reserved for the privileged elite.

That the Iranian economy has fared tolerably well under the impact of the war has not gone unnoticed by Iraq. In February 1984, Baghdad launched a new phase of the war by initiating a general policy of striking oil tankers in the Gulf loaded with Iranian oil. The Iraqi strikes—and the Iranian counterattacks against ships loading Arab oil—

\* There were two separate conspiracies in the summer of 1980 involving more than 600 officers. In 1982, several score officers were implicated in an alleged plot to assassinate Khomeini, and at least 70 were executed. In 1983, five air force officers were charged with a plot to bomb Khomeini's home.

\*Officially, conscription is universal for all males aged 19-24, but deferments seem to have been fairly easy to obtain for educational purposes up through the end of 1983. Since then the draft has become much less selective, although it still seems that military service falls disproportionately upon the lower class and rural youth.



caused the insurance rates for ships sailing into the Gulf to increase, thus discouraging some buyers. Iran has experienced a decline in revenues, which it has attempted to counteract by discounting its oil as much as \$2.50/barrel. The decrease in revenues has affected government spending, but it has not been severe enough to impede Iran's own war efforts. By mid-summer it even appeared as if the Iranian discounts had succeeded in restoring oil exports to the levels they had been before the "tanker war" had begun.

## Weary of War

In assessing the overall impact of four years of war, it seems that the process of mobilizing the populace for war has clearly facilitated the IRP's project to desecularize Iran. As long as the country is perceived to be in danger, there seems to be general acquiescence to government policies. The government was able to capitalize upon the image of Iran as a victim of aggression. Even the virtual reign of terror against the Mujahidin in the last half of 1981 failed to provoke a widespread protest.

There seems to have been a gradual change in popular attitudes toward the war, though, since the end of 1982. Iranian military successes, beginning in early 1982 and culminating in the liberation of Khorramshahr and the expulsion of Iraqi forces from most of Iranian territory, have altered how the war is perceived. Once Iranian forces began to launch offensives into Iraq, and even succeeded in capturing some Iraqi land—at the price of heavy casualties—a greater willingness to question war aims seems to have developed among the political elite and military as well as among the general populace.<sup>12</sup> The broadening of war objectives from liberating Iran from foreign forces to liberating Iraq from the Ba'th government reportedly has aroused concern among various persons who make war-related decisions. There are credible reports of serious disputes even within the IRP.<sup>13</sup> Neverthe-

less, Khomeini himself has been determined to continue the war, and his position has discouraged public debate.<sup>14</sup>

Among the population as a whole, concern over the war has manifested itself as a diffuse form of war-weariness. There is no evidence to suggest that expressions of frustration with the prolonged fighting have crystallized into opposition to the government's policies. Indeed, the war is still generally perceived as a wrong inflicted upon the country, and the government has been able to recruit young men to join the armed forces without encountering major resistance. Nevertheless, Iranians who have travelled outside their country during 1983 and 1984 report that there is pervasive impatience and a growing concern about the increasing casualties. It would probably be premature to characterize this general uneasiness as discontent. The sense of grievance against Iraq is still strong. It was reinforced in May and June (1984) when Iraqi missiles caused several hundred civilian casualties in more than a dozen cities and towns of western Iran.

The IRP has proven itself capable of governing a country of 40 million engaged in war. The physical destruction of the war has been largely contained to the southwest, while oil revenues have been used to limit negative economic effects. It is unclear how popular the IRP government is, but it is obvious that the majority of the population is willing to acquiesce to its rule, at least as long as the war continues. Since the war has dragged on now for four years, the IRP has been able to establish roots for the theocratic society it envisions for Iran. This means that if the war ends on terms perceived as favorable to Iran, far from signaling the start of a revolt against the government—as many observers have hypothesized—it could actually enhance its survival for years to come. If Tehran were to accept a ceasefire under the present conditions of apparent stalemate, the legitimacy of the regime could be seriously eroded. If Iran began to encounter major military defeats, then the IRP would be blamed directly, and its efforts to institutionalize theocracy would be in jeopardy. ■

## FOOTNOTES

<sup>1</sup>For more detail about the Mujahidin's attitudes toward Marxism, see Ervand Abrahamian, *Iran Between Two Revolutions* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1982), pp. 492-493; and Suroosh Irfani, *Revolutionary Islam in Iran* (London: Zed Press, 1983), p. 109.

<sup>2</sup>Rajavi's meeting with Iraq's foreign minister, Tariq Aziz, in March 1984 was cited by Bani-Sadr as the primary reason for his break with Rajavi. See *Iran Times*, April 20, 1984, p. 1.

<sup>3</sup>See *Iran Times*, May 6 and 13, 1983.

<sup>4</sup>For an assessment of the overall Kurdish situation since December 1983, see "Learning from Lessons Past," *The Middle East* May 1984, p. 48.

<sup>5</sup>Monarchist groups in exile are reviewed in Richard Chesnoff, "Iran/Paris: The Iranian Exiles," *The New York Times Magazine*, February 12, 1984.

<sup>6</sup>For an informative analysis of the "Islamicization" of society see Jean-Loup Herbert, "La force mobilisatrice d'une spiritualité," in *Le Monde Diplomatique*, April 1984, pp. 17-18.

<sup>7</sup>For an analysis of the effect of sanctions on the Iranian economy, see Philip Shehadi, "Economic Sanctions and Iranian Trade," *MERIP Reports* no. 98 (July/August 1981), pp. 15-16.

<sup>8</sup>Bandar Abbas' development as a major shipping port is explained in *The Middle East*, May 1984, p. 51.

<sup>9</sup>*Le Monde Diplomatique*, April 1984, p. 14.

<sup>10</sup>For an evaluation of agricultural production since the revolution see "Striving towards more efficient agriculture," *Arabia: The Islamic World Review*, July 1983, pp. 29-31.

<sup>11</sup>*Los Angeles Times*, April 12, 1984, p. 1-B4; and *Financial Times* (London), June 5, 1984, p. 20.

<sup>12</sup>The army in particular is very critical of the human wave tactics used by the Revolutionary Guards in their offensives against Iraqi positions. See *Financial Times*, June 5, 1984, p. 20.

<sup>13</sup>*The Middle East*, April 1984, p. 16.

<sup>14</sup>Khomeini most recently reaffirmed the necessity of continuing the war during his public address to mark Id-il-Fitr. See *Iran Times*, July 6, 1984.

## Slugletts, from page 50

<sup>27</sup>*Ibid.*; *MEED*, March 4, 1984.

<sup>28</sup>*FT*, December 9, 1983.

<sup>29</sup>*MEED*, May 11, 1984.

<sup>30</sup>*FET*, April 1984.

<sup>31</sup>*FT*, October 3, 1983; *MEED*, March 11, 1983.

<sup>32</sup>*FET*, April 1984.

<sup>33</sup>*MEED*, April 20, 1984.

<sup>34</sup>*MEED*, August 5, 1983.

<sup>35</sup>*MEED*, September 9, 1983.

<sup>36</sup>*MEED*, September 16, 1983.

<sup>37</sup>*Al-Anba* (Kuwait), April 12, 1984; in Foreign Broadcast Information Service, April 17, 1984.

<sup>38</sup>*WP*, March 24, 1984.

<sup>39</sup>Marion Farouk-Sluglett, "Socialist Iraq, 1963-1978: Towards a Reappraisal," *Orient*, 23, 2 (June 1982), p. 216.

<sup>40</sup>For an interesting discussion of the category of bureaucracy, see Hugh Roberts, "The Algerian Bureaucracy," in Talal Assad and Roger Owen, eds., *Sociology of Developing Societies: The Middle East* (London and New York, 1983), pp. 95-114.

<sup>41</sup>The number of building permits rose from 30,000 in 1968 to 167,000 in 1980. 'Isam al-Khafaji, *al-Dawla w'al-Tatawwur al-Ra'smali fi'l-Iraq, 1968-1978* (Cairo, 1984), p. 72.

<sup>42</sup>Marion Farouk-Sluglett, *op. cit.*

<sup>43</sup>*MEED*, April 29, 1984.

<sup>44</sup>*MEED*, May 11, 1984.

<sup>45</sup>*Middle East Reporter* (Beirut), January 14, 1984.

<sup>46</sup>*MEED*, August 12, 1983.

<sup>47</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>48</sup>*Middle East Reporter*, January 14, 1984.

<sup>49</sup>*MEED*, April 20, 1984.

<sup>50</sup>*Ibid.*



Iraqi prisoners-of-war in Dizful, April 1983.

UPI/Bettman Archive

## Treatment of Prisoners-of-War in the Iran-Iraq Conflict

*Excerpts from International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) press release no. 1462, May 11, 1983.*

*Geneva (ICRC)*—Since the outbreak of the conflict between the Islamic Republic of Iran and the Republic of Iraq the highest authorities of both those states have several times confirmed their intention to honour their international obligations deriving from the Geneva conventions. Despite these assurances and its repeated

representations, the International Committee of the Red Cross, which has had a delegation in both countries since the start of hostilities, more than thirty months ago, has encountered all kinds of obstacles in the exercise of its mandate under the Geneva conventions.

Faced with grave and repeated violations of international humanitarian law which it has itself witnessed or of which it has established

the existence through reliable and verifiable sources, and having found it impossible to induce the parties to put a stop to such violations, the ICRC felt in duty bound to appeal on 9 May to all states parties to the Geneva conventions. The ICRC stressed that pursuant to its policy, it undertakes such an overt step only in very exceptional circumstances, when dictated by the urgent need to protect the victims and when its confidential

representations have failed to put an end to the violations.

In a memorandum to the two belligerents and to all other signatories to the conventions the ICRC outlined the conditions in which the POWs in each country are held. It also pointed to grave violations committed by both countries, such as the summary execution of captive soldiers, abandoning of enemy wounded on the battlefield and indiscriminate bombardment of towns and villages.

In the Islamic Republic of Iran the breaches are all the more serious, considering the large number of prisoners, and to most of them the ICRC no longer has access. According to the Iranian authorities they are holding between 45,000 and 50,000 Iraqi prisoners of war. Although the Third Geneva Conventions confers on those prisoners a legal status entitling them to specific rights, the Iranian authorities' continuous delaying tactics since May 1982, the obstacles and restrictions they have raised and

their refusal to allow the ICRC to visit some POW camps have prevented the ICRC from carrying out its work for the prisoners whom the Iranian authorities admit they are holding.

Moreover, the ICRC memorandum states, the Iraqi prisoners of war are subjected to ideological and political pressure, contrary to the convention, constituting an affront to the prisoners' dignity and disregard of their well-being. Such pressure—intimidation, humiliation, forced participation in demonstrations decrying the Iraqi government—has been increasing since September 1982.

The ICRC also reports that events in some camps have led to death and injury of prisoners.

In addition, most of the severely wounded and sick prisoners have not been repatriated as required by the convention.

In the Republic of Iraq the ICRC had registered by 1 March 1983 some 6,800 Iranian prisoners of war who, after initial difficulties, have been

able for the last few months to correspond with their families in a satisfactory manner. Every month since October 1980 ICRC delegates have visited the prisoners of war, in a manner consistent with the procedure laid down in the Geneva Convention. However, the ICRC is convinced that some Iranian prisoners—several hundred of whose names are known to it—have been concealed from it since the beginning of the conflict and are imprisoned in places to which it has never had access. Only a few dozen such prisoners have been returned to the prisoner-of-war camps and registered by the ICRC. Ill treatment of POWs has been witnessed and disorders in camps have been quelled by force of arms. Most of the severely wounded and sick have not been repatriated as required by the convention.

Furthermore, tens of thousands of Iranian civilians have been deported to Iraq by the army, in breach of the Fourth Geneva Convention. . . .

## Arms Merchants in the Gulf War

Both sides in the Gulf war have had to import billions of dollars worth of weapons, ordnance and military services in order to maintain and expand their battle forces. As the tables show, the number of military suppliers to both belligerents has expanded greatly in the period since the war began. Before the war, the US and the USSR were the major suppliers to Iran and Iraq respectively, although Iraq had already made efforts to diversify its suppliers. The present roster displays the extent to which European, South American and Asian industrializing countries have taken advantage of the war to boost their arms exports and improve their positions for other sales and contracts as well.

Several other features stand out from the data provided by the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI). One is the extent to which both superpowers have supplied both belligerents, directly or indirectly, since the war began. Over the past year, the Soviet Union has resumed its prewar role as major sup-

plier to Iraq, but both Washington and Moscow have otherwise preferred to maintain relatively low profiles and use allies and clients instead of direct sales. Both the US and the USSR appear interested in keeping postwar military supply and political alliance options open in the region.

Israel and South Korea have been major suppliers of spare parts for Iran's US-supplied weaponry. (The foreign minister of Brazil, itself an important supplier to both sides, claims that South Africa has also provided Iran with spares for US weapons.)<sup>1</sup> For Iraq, France has been the major Western supplier, providing an estimated \$5 billion worth of arms since the war began, with Iraq taking 40 percent of total French arms exports in this period. French officials claim, and Washington denies, that the US tacitly endorses the French-Iraqi military supply relationship. Italy has been another significant Western supplier to Iraq. Washington's most important Arab allies—Egypt, Jordan and Saudi Arabia—

have transferred arms, financed military purchases, and provided critical maintenance and training personnel.

Since the war began, China has been a major arms source for both sides. Chinese jet fighters have been assembled in Egypt and Jordan for shipment to Iraq.<sup>2</sup> Chinese supplies of fighters, tanks and heavy artillery to Iran were being transferred via North Korea, but there are recent reports of a \$1.3 billion direct supply deal between Peking and Tehran.<sup>3</sup> Iran also has a considerable capacity to produce its own ordnance and spare parts for less advanced weaponry. In the case of Iran, the private arms market has been particularly important, and has heightened the difficulty of pinpointing arms shipments to the combatants.

When this war ends or winds down, both belligerents will no doubt engage in massive rearmament projects, especially expensive, high-technology weapons systems. Both the war itself and this prospective rearmament cycle have increased military



acquisitions in the region, especially among the Gulf Cooperation Council countries. All in all, the prospects for arms trade restraint in the years ahead in this region look bleak indeed.

—Joe Stork

#### Footnotes

- <sup>1</sup>Financial Times, June 8, 1984.
- <sup>2</sup>Aviation Week and Space Technology, April 11, 1983.
- <sup>3</sup>Washington Post, April 3, 1984.

### Iran

Major Weapons Before War	Major Weapons During War	Other Support
US	US <sup>1</sup>	US <sup>1</sup>
USSR	USSR <sup>2</sup>	USSR <sup>2</sup>
France	China	Greece
Italy	France <sup>3</sup>	UK <sup>4</sup>
UK	Italy	Israel
	GDR	Syria
	Switzerland	PDRYemen
	Israel	N. Korea
	Syria	S. Korea
	N. Korea	Taiwan
	S. Korea <sup>5</sup>	Viet Nam
	Algeria	Algeria
	Libya	Libya
	Argentina	Argentina <sup>7</sup>
	Brazil <sup>6</sup>	

#### Notes

- <sup>1</sup>Not officially sanctioned; private dealers and individual companies; often via Israel.
- <sup>2</sup>Via Libya, North Korea, Syria and Warsaw Treaty Organization countries.
- <sup>3</sup>Last three of 12 Kaman Class Fast Attack Craft.
- <sup>4</sup>Small arms, ammunition or spares.
- <sup>5</sup>US-made anti-aircraft missiles for F-4 Phantom fighters.
- <sup>6</sup>Armored vehicles via Libya.
- <sup>7</sup>Small arms, ammunition or spares; training, military advisers or troops.

Source: SIPRI Yearbook 1984

### Iraq

Major Weapons Before War	Major Weapons During War	Other Support
USSR	US <sup>1</sup>	USSR
France	USSR	Belgium <sup>4</sup>
Brazil	China	France
	France	FRG
	FRG <sup>2</sup>	Italy
	Italy	Portugal <sup>4</sup>
	Spain	Spain
	Czechoslovakia	UK <sup>4</sup>
	GDR	Czechoslovakia
	Hungary	GDR
	Poland	Poland
	Yugoslavia	Egypt <sup>5</sup>
	Austria <sup>3</sup>	Jordan <sup>5</sup>
	Switzerland	Kuwait <sup>6</sup>
	Egypt	Saudi Arabia <sup>6</sup>
	Jordan	UAE <sup>6</sup>
	N. Korea	Pakistan
	Brazil	N. Korea
	Chile <sup>8</sup>	Philippines <sup>6</sup>
		Morocco
		Ethiopia <sup>4</sup>
		Sudan <sup>7</sup>
		Brazil

#### Notes

- <sup>1</sup>60 Hughes helicopters; Learjet 35A reconnaissance aircraft; SAMs from Euromissile; tank transporters.
- <sup>2</sup>GHN-45 155-mm howitzers via Jordan.
- <sup>3</sup>Small arms, ammunition or spares. Spain; Roland-2
- <sup>4</sup>Small arms, ammunition or spares; training, military advisers or troops.
- <sup>5</sup>Financial support.
- <sup>6</sup>Training, military advisers or troops.
- <sup>7</sup>Not listed by SIPRI. See Tim Frasca, "Iraq Buys Cluster Bombs from Chile," MERIP Reports, #122(March/April 1984).

Source: SIPRI Yearbook 1984

## Oil and the Outcome of the Iran-Iraq War

*Excerpts from a report by Thomas McNaugher and William Quandt of the Brookings Institution, published on May 14, 1984 by Cambridge Energy Research Associates. These excerpts appeared in Arab Oil and Gas (Paris), June 1, 1984.*

The Iran-Iraq war is reaching a critical phase. As a result, there is more of a chance today than ever before that a major change in the war is at hand. This could have both major consequences for the flow of oil in the near term, and broader implications for power and influence in the region over the longer term. Although we are not

yet convinced that the Iran-Iraq war threatens a major disruption in the flow of oil, the odds are beginning to change in the direction of greater danger for Western interests—meaning that the threat to the world oil market could become larger in this new phase. But the gravest threat could come not during the war itself but from the outcome of the war.

Because of the oil cushion that exists around the world, any disruption brought on by the conflict would probably be limited in size and duration. Those who build up inventories in the heat of the moment, as in 1979, would probably find themselves stuck

with high-priced stocks. The oil market could, however, be decisively changed by an out-and-out Iranian victory, which would make Iran the dominant influence on production—and on production decisions—in much of the Gulf region. This could reduce the range of available capacity for world oil supplied in the rest of the 1980s and into the 1990s, and make an Iranian-dominated coalition the swing supplier in OPEC. . . .

The Iran-Iraq War has already resulted in a disruption of the flow of oil, but prices have not been significantly affected and therefore much of the world has not reacted with alarm.

In this sense, the oil shocks of the 1970s are not necessarily a good guide to the 1980s. It will now take a much larger disruption than any we have known to send prices to new levels and to keep them there. The Iran-Iraq War is still, however, the most likely catalyst for such a development. Several outcomes to the war are conceivable, and each has different implications for the long-term price of oil.

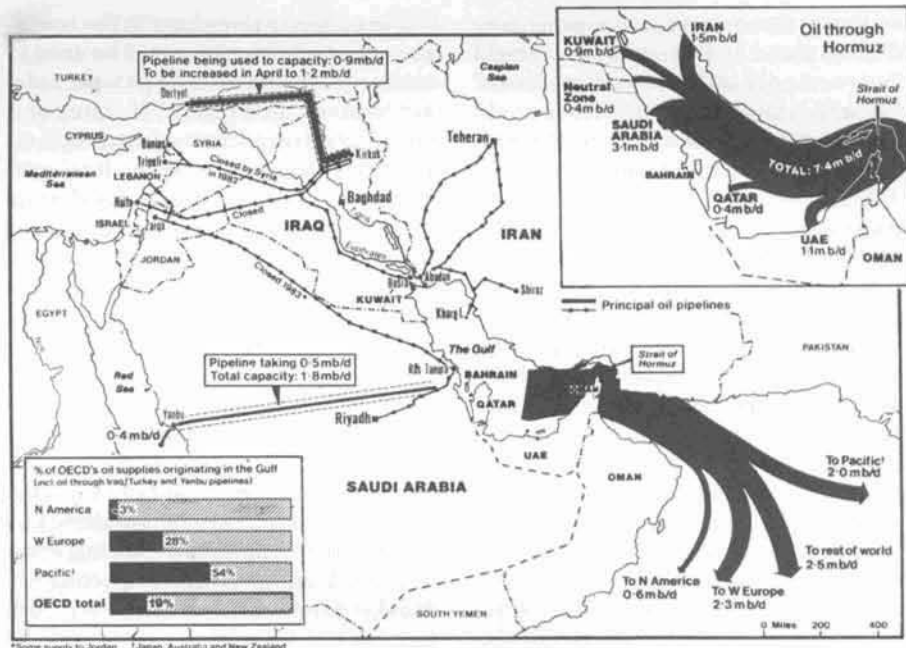
## Scenario One: Balance of Power

The Iran-Iraq conflict may play itself out in such a way that a rough balance of power is established [between] these two Gulf powers, with Saudi Arabia as the third important player in the regional game. In recent times, Saudi Arabia has supported Iraq, but the logic of the Saudi position is to try to prevent the hegemony of either Iran or Iraq. This three-sided power balance has within it the potential for shifts of alignment.

For OPEC, a stalemated Iran-Iraq conflict, with competition among the three big oil producers of the Gulf, is a prescription for organizational weakness. It will be extremely difficult to develop any consensus on oil policy among Baghdad, Tehran and Riyadh. Oil-market shares will be one of many topics in dispute. The stakes are large and the economic needs of each party are substantial. No one of the three Gulf powers will hold back production for long if the others are aggressively seeking a larger market share. If the current round of fighting comes to an end, Iran and Iraq will both seek to increase exports, probably at Saudi expense. In this scenario, downward pressure on prices could be expected.

## Scenario Two: Iranian Hegemony

A second outcome of the Iran-Iraq war, probably less likely than the first, is a decisive Iranian victory in southern Iraq, which would establish Iran as a hegemonic power in the Gulf. If Tehran could consolidate its position, it would have a strong voice in the political and economic decisions of its neighbors. This could



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mean that Iran would influence decisions affecting a large proportion of the oil produced in the Gulf. In periods of soft demand, Iran might pressure Iraq and Saudi Arabia to keep production low. The closer this outcome approximates an Iranian monopoly of power, the easier it will be to keep oil prices high by manipulating the supply side of the market. The competitive pressures that would be felt in the first scenario would be measurably reduced in circumstances of Iranian hegemony. An Iranian-dominated coalition would thus become the swing producer for OPEC. Most of the world's spare capacity would be at its disposal.

## Scenario Three: Continuing Attrition and Oil Disruption

A variant of these first two outcomes would be a continuation of the Iran-Iraq war, with Iran in a strong position but without a clearcut victory. In these circumstances, there would be recurring danger of oil disruptions of moderate size. These could result from successful Iranian or Iraqi strikes at sensitive targets—Kharg Island, tankers, oil facilities, pipelines—and for short periods some oil would be unavailable to customers. Since large amounts of oil are available elsewhere, adjustments could be made

**Table I**  
**Gulf Oil Production\***  
(1st Qtr 1984, mbd)

	Production	Consumption	Exports
Saudi Arabia	4.8	0.8	4.0
Iran	2.2	0.5	1.7
Iraq	1.0	0.3	0.7
Kuwait	0.9	0.1	0.8
UAE	1.2	0.1	1.1
Qatar	0.4	—	0.4
Neutral Zone	0.4	—	0.4
	10.9	1.8	9.1

\*Including natural gas liquids

without much impact on price (see Tables 2 and 3). But customers would not react only to the immediate loss of oil, which might be small. They would be making judgments as well about future availability of Gulf oil.

It is the uncertainty surrounding any disruption of oil supplies from the Gulf that can add to the price effect. If one could be sure that an Iraqi strike on oil tankers were essentially a one-shot affair, oil markets would not register much of a reaction. But if an attack were seen as the opening phase of a sustained military campaign that would affect oil supplies for a long period, the market reaction would differ. From this perspective, expectations will have a strong bearing on stock usage. US government policy on use of the Strategic Petroleum Reserve will also affect calculations in periods of uncertainty associated with small disruptions.

From our analysis of the political and military situation, it seems most likely that any disruptions of oil supplies as a result of the Iran-Iraq war would be limited in size and duration.

Spare capacity elsewhere in the world, plus strategic stocks, could be used to make up for lost oil. The prospect of a blockade of the Strait of Hormuz or a successful Iranian attack on Saudi oil facilities seems relatively low, and these are the only large-scale disruptions that would entail major price effects. Those who gamble on a sharp and sustained rise in prices may find themselves with high-priced stocks on hand when the disruption is over.

## The Greater Danger

The most difficult oil-supply problem for the world to deal with would not be the small disruptions resulting from the continuing Iran-Iraq conflict. Market forces, and military capabilities, would help keep prices in line. The greater danger would come from an Iranian victory. Oil would doubtless continue to flow from the Gulf, but Iran would have considerable influence over the terms on which it was made available. In time, political changes might take place on the Arab

side of the Gulf. Conservative Islamic regimes might be hostile to the West, and foreign technicians might be asked to leave. Oil-field maintenance could decline. Spare capacity might be reduced. Oil prices might not immediately be affected, but the stage would be set for oil shocks later in the decade when demand for Gulf oil is likely to increase.

In brief, from the perspective of the oil market, the danger inherent in the Iran-Iraq conflict is not so much the threat of occasional disruptions in current supplies. It is, rather, the danger that an Iranian victory would fundamentally change the nature of the Gulf oil-supply system of the late 1980s. It is the prospect of future oil shocks growing out of conditions set in place by an Iranian victory in the battle for Basra that should concern us. By contrast, the short-term picture is considerably less alarming, and the most likely scenario of prolonged stalemate probably helps insure relatively soft oil markets for the next few years. ■

# Rafsanjani Discusses Timing of Next Iranian Offensive

*Excerpts from the Friday prayer speech of Hojjat ul-Islam Hashemi-Rafsanjani, the Imam's representative to the Supreme Defense Council, and Speaker of the Majlis, broadcast on Tehran radio, July 6, 1984.*

As the spokesman of the Supreme Defense Council I am able to inform you that today the Islamic Republic forces are enjoying the best position on the fronts since the beginning of the war. The Saddamists are suffering from the worst position, despite the noise and din reverberating around the world. Iraq's vulnerable areas have been pinpointed all along the front, our plans have been prepared, and our forces have received the necessary training and have obtained the necessary weapons and ammunition and at their stations and ready for the time when we will move. But as to when we should take action, this is among the extremely import-

ant issues at this time and has completely puzzled and perplexed the Westerners to the point of witlessness. They do not have correct yardsticks and they lack proper intelligence information from us, praise be to God. Their intelligence links have been severed and they speak with conjectures and guesses, thanks to the intelligence information which is at the disposal of first class senior commanders? It is clear that this is the level of their intelligence. For instance, a satellite can pass overhead and photograph a bus or something else in the desert or an AWACs aircraft takes photographs from the other side. This is the level of their intelligence.

But as for us we have always maintained that our attacks are not motivated by revenge. We do not wish to kill people. We do not want our own boys to be martyred or the Iraqis to be killed, and insofar as is possible we

try not to inflict a nosebleed on anyone. So should we wish to launch our operations, we must calculate a great many things: our own capabilities, the enemy's capabilities, our chosen place, the political conditions and our concrete aims. The day when we said the final attack will come, these people thought that we would carry out this action in a month's time. And now we say that the final attack might take place in a year's time, it might take place in 2 months time, or it might even take place today, this afternoon. We are ready. We are fully prepared and are assessing the conditions. When we carry out certain operations we wait for some time so that Saddam's international backers can assess the position and come to realize, if possible, that this beastly Saddam—quoting the imam—is incorrigible and should be left alone so that we can solve the problem without war. . . .



The world more or less knows about our situation, and it *understands* our words and what we say. Nonetheless, it is now contriving to create a set of circumstances, kicking up a dust storm and bringing about a crisis whereby it hopes to save Saddam; it has embarked on various moves; it has been defeated in all its moves; we do not know what its next strategem is going to be, and we have to await this in the future. It has done everything. For the past 4 or 5 months, on every possible occasion they said that Iran's final attack would coincide with this or that day. On Nowruz they said they would attack on 13 Sha'ban, for instance. They said they would attack on Imam Husayn's birthday. They said they would attack on 1 Ramadan. They said that we would attack on [?] Ramadan. They said they would attack on 21 Ramadan. They said they would attack on 'Id al-Fitr. So every day they concoct something for themselves, some occasion and write an article forecasting things so that they can claim that they have intelligence.

Just imagine how this situation is affecting the Saddamists! To begin with, the Saddamists have no morale whatsoever and they have witnessed our assault. They have seen what our *hezbollahi* forces do to them in the trenches when they launch an attack. Just imagine how Saddams' unfortunate army is suffering in the trenches. Every moment it expects something. Every dark night it expects something. Every festival it has such expectations. It expects something on every religious holiday. And the Westerners keep churning things up, and these people become even more scared.

And recently two sets of analyses have been obtained from these people's pronouncements. It is said that when these people make all this noise and din about Iran, saying that Iran has no weapons, Iran is beset by differences, Iran has this and that, Iran cannot launch an attack and is procrastinating, they pursue two aims. One of these is that they want Iran to embark on a hasty attack, that it should attack before it has mustered all its capabilities so that it will not be successful. The second move which they have recently made is to shore up the morale of the Iraqi troops. This

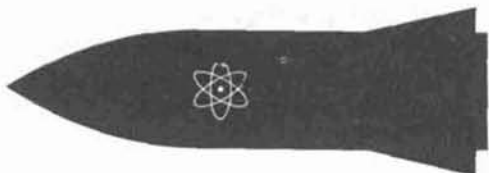
state of affairs of not knowing, the terror which they are daily expecting, and all these alerts, all these alerts have tremendously frightened these troops who are constantly clutching their rifles. So they said: Let us do something whereby Saddam will be saved from this nerve-breaking experience and his army too will be saved in the same way. These two views have emerged from their pronouncements, and devilry lies behind all this. These people do not realize what the situation is. So I would like to assure them that what we have is nothing to do with today, tomorrow, festivals, mournings, and similar things. This depends on what is expedient for the public, on what is possible. It could take place in the month of Ramadan, it could happen in Shawwal, it could be on 'Id-e Ghadir, it could be on 'Ashura. Whenever it is expedient and this has been worked out, and whenever the leader issues the command, our forces will be ready on the battlefield. [applause]. . .

Today the world and world public opinion has been informed that the Islamic Republic's policy is to preserve security in the Persian Gulf, which is the artery of the world economy, and that this policy will continue as long as possible. However, on the other hand, we will not allow a

Western or Eastern country to buy oil from Saudi Arabia but not to be able to take oil from Kharg. No, this won't do. Both are the same. Either you can take oil from Kharg and from Saudi Arabia, or you will not be able to take it from anywhere, and we will implement this policy. We have demonstrated that we can implement it. Now, the entire world of arrogance with all its cunning and politicking sits together at the summit conference of the industrialized world, in the Gulf Cooperation Council, and with their other allies in the region and starts hatching conspiracies; but what do they gain? Today Kharg is exporting oil, the same as a month ago. Today the Islamic Republic is in control in the Persian Gulf, as it was a month ago, and can use its forces at any time and in any place it wishes. We are still maintaining the security of the Persian Gulf. Therefore, they do not gain anything from the issue, and the war should follow its course in the battlefields. Saddam has attacked us on the ground and should be confronted on the ground, and we will extirpate Saddam and the Ba'th Party on the ground and, God willing, we shall liberate the Iraqi people. . .

Source: Foreign Broadcast Information Service, July 9, 1984.

**The one on the left will start WWII.  
The one on the right will end it.**



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## US Ready to Intervene

**T**he current phase of the war between Iran and Iraq has prompted a level of US military intervention in the Gulf region that is new and unprecedented in both qualitative and quantitative terms, and holds the risk of a more direct combat role on Iraq's behalf. Since early 1983, the stalemate in the war appeared to be working in Iran's favor. Its greater weight in terms of population and economic resources gave it the edge in a strategy of attrition. Beginning in the fall of 1983, Iraq threatened to counter by attacking Iran's oil exporting capacity. This campaign finally began in March and April 1984, with missile attacks against oil tankers near Iran's Kharg Island loading facility. Iran's measured response—"an eye for two eyes," as one US official put it—forced a two week halt in this phase of the war, although Iraq resumed these attacks at the end of June. Iran, meanwhile, has had several hundred thousand combatants, perhaps half a million, poised along the southern front for another "final offensive." Most observers believe that whatever the differences within the Islamic Republic leadership there will indeed be one more major offensive. If this offensive fails, the war will nevertheless go on, at least at the level of continued border clashes, for as long as the two major

protagonists, Saddam Hussein and Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini, remain in power.

This prescription would seem to fit the objective of the United States as formulated recently by Assistant Secretary of State Richard Murphy, who told a congressional committee that "a victory by either side is neither militarily achievable nor strategically desirable."<sup>1</sup> Since last fall, though, Washington's strategic desire to see no victor in the Gulf war has required a greater US political and even military intervention on Iraq's behalf. "We want to keep Iraq in the field and get the war ended," was how one State Department official characterized Washington's current definition of neutrality.<sup>2</sup>

Washington's neutrality has been extremely flexible from the beginning of this war. Iraq relied heavily on Western intelligence evaluations of Iranian military capabilities when it invaded Iran in September 1980, and leading Iranian counterrevolutionary figures such as General Gholam Ali Oveissi visited Washington and Baghdad in the weeks prior to the war.

Once full-scale war erupted, US military involvement in the region, if not with the combatants themselves, became significant. Four days after the Iraqi invasion, on Sep-

tember 26, 1980, the CIA station chief in Saudi Arabia dispatched an urgent but vague message that the kingdom's leaders wanted US military help. High level Carter administration officials met to assemble a series of options and debate which one they would like the Saudis to request. Defense Secretary Harold Brown and National Security Adviser Zbigniew Brzezinski saw the crisis as an opportunity to transfer to Saudi Arabia 40 F-14 fighter planes from the aircraft carrier USS Eisenhower, already in the Arabian Sea, a similar number of F-15 fighters from US air bases, and to send several hundred US military technicians to operate Hawk anti-aircraft missiles there. In the view of some military officers, the war gave the US leverage to extract more intimate Saudi collaboration with the long-term build-up of US military forces in the region.

Secretary of State Edmund S. Muskie took a more cautious tack, arguing that a major military intervention in the Gulf would undermine assertions of US neutrality in the war and violate the mutual nonintervention pledge the administration had made in a meeting between Muskie and Soviet Foreign Minister Andrei A. Gromyko on September 25. The debate was complicated by intelligence reports that Oman and Saudi Arabia were about to allow Iraq to launch attacks from their airfields.

On September 28, Brown, Brzezinski and Muskie agreed that USAF Airborne Warning and Control Aircraft (AWACs) should be sent immediately and were assured by Pentagon officials that F-14s from the USS Eisenhower could reach Saudi Arabia in less than two hours if needed. General David Jones, chairman of the US Joint Chiefs of

regional air defense system built to US specifications to host any eventual intervention by the US Rapid Deployment Force. The AWACs agreement, according to military analyst Anthony Cordesman, provided each Saudi air base with the "service facilities, refueling capability, parts and key munitions in place to accept over-the-horizon reinforcement for [70] USAF F-15 fighters. No conceivable improvement in US airlift or USAF rapid deployment and 'bare basing' capability could come close to giving the US this rapid and effective reinforcement capability."<sup>5</sup> An added advantage was that the Saudis paid for it all.

## "55-45 Percent Neutrality"

Under Reagan, the AWACs-centered military construction proceeded apace, mainly in Saudi Arabia but also in Oman and Bahrain. The US also endorsed the efforts of the Saudi-led Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) to integrate the Gulf states' air defenses into a single network. Policy in the Gulf war continued to be one of professed neutrality. The temptation to lure Baghdad away from the Soviet Union, which had cut off arms supplies to Iraq, was tempered by a concern not to alienate Tehran any further, since Iran remained the "strategic prize" in the region. One White House official candidly described the resulting balance recently as a "55-45 percent neutrality" in favor of Iraq.<sup>6</sup> Early on, in March 1981, Secretary of State Alexander Haig told Congress he noted "some shift" in Iraq's policy

# in Gulf War Joe Stork and Martha Wenger

Staff, happened to be in Saudi Arabia at the time. He was directed to get a formal Saudi request for the AWACs and to dissuade them and the Omanis from allowing Iraq to use their facilities.<sup>3</sup>

By October 9, four US Air Force (USAF) AWACs were providing 24 hour-a-day coverage of Iraqi and Iranian battle movements northward as far as Dizful and scanning Iran's oil terminal on Kharg Island and its oil fields along the Gulf Coast. US military personnel screened all the intelligence gathered, passing on to the Saudis only what the US considered necessary for their defense. Another carrier battle group joined the USS Eisenhower in the Arabian Sea, and within three weeks the number of US, French, British and Australian warships in the area had doubled from 30 to 60. A US ground radar station flown in to Saudi Arabia enabled "all American units there to talk to each other, to talk to the fleet centered on two aircraft carriers in the Arabian Sea and to communicate with American military headquarters in Europe." The official number of US military personnel there had jumped from around 400 to around 800 in the weeks since the war began.<sup>4</sup>

The dispatch of the USAF AWACs led directly to the Reagan administration decision in early 1981 to sell five AWACs to Saudi Arabia as the centerpiece of an integrated

reflecting a "greater sense of concern about the behavior of Soviet imperialism in the Middle East."<sup>7</sup> Several weeks later, the State Department lifted a freeze on the sale of five Boeing passenger aircraft to Iraq, and Assistant Secretary of State Morris Draper met top Iraqi officials in Baghdad. In 1982, the administration removed Iraq from the list of countries officially regarded as supporting "international terrorism," paving the way for credits and exports.

In April 1982 the administration allowed Iraq to purchase between six and twelve L100 transport aircraft "for civilian use."<sup>8</sup> When Iran turned the tide of the war in June-July 1982, the State Department announced that the US was prepared to hold joint military exercises with states in the region.<sup>9</sup> Early in 1983, by which time Iraq was staring bankruptcy in the face, the administration granted some \$400 million in credit guarantees for the export of US wheat and other agricultural commodities to Iraq. This not only supplied Iraq with badly needed foodstuffs; more significantly, it demonstrated political and financial support to other prospective creditors, including Arab and European governments and international banks.

The fall of 1983 posed again, as in September 1980, the question of direct US military intervention in the war, or at least more explicit backing for Baghdad. Against a background of reports that Iraq was losing the war of attrition,



the National Security Council decided in October to continue an official policy of "military neutrality" while informing US allies in Europe and the Gulf that an Iraqi defeat "would be contrary to US interests."

## Five Ways to Tilt

This further "tilt" towards Iraq took five different forms. First, the US encouraged its allies to make major weapons deliveries to Iraq. Ironically, at the same time the Soviet Union had resumed arms supplies to Iraq which it had cut off when Iraq invaded Iran. Washington dropped altogether its reservations about the French decision to "loan" Iraq five Super Etendard jet fighters equipped with Exocet anti-ship missiles for Baghdad's planned tanker war, and carefully ignored a major French airlift of weapons in October. Second, Washington encouraged Iraq's Arab allies to resume financial assistance to Baghdad. High level State and Defense Department emissaries toured the Gulf in October, December, February and again in April. Washington also endorsed the participation of US banks and construction companies in several schemes to increase Iraqi oil exports by building new pipelines through Jordan and Saudi Arabia. Third, Washington began pressuring allies and clients—including Israel, South Korea and Great Britain—to halt all military related sales of weapons or spares to Iran, and by June the administration was bragging through its favored columnists that supplies to Iran had "dried up."<sup>8</sup>

Fourth, the Reagan administration played along with the Iraqi tanker war talk. In response to Iranian statements that it would permit no oil exports from the Gulf if its own exports were cut off, Reagan warned on October 20, 1983, that "the free world" could not "stand by and allow anyone to close the Straits of Hormuz and the Persian Gulf." More recently, after Iraqi and Iranian warplanes had hit some dozen tankers in the Gulf, Reagan backed Iraq even more explicitly. He declared that "the enemy's commerce and trade is a fair target," while Iran's attacks against the ships of third party allies of Baghdad, and Tehran's refusal to negotiate a settlement, placed its tactics "beyond bounds."<sup>10</sup>

Fifth, the administration ordered further planning for US military intervention in the event of an Iraqi collapse. After the Marine barracks in Lebanon were bombed in late October, Defense Secretary Weinberger told a congressional committee that proof of Iranian involvement would justify US military aid to Iraq. Washington announced in February that its warships in and near the Gulf had orders to shoot any aircraft approaching within five miles. On February 26, 1984, the guided missile destroyer USS Lawrence fired on an Iranian P3 patrol plane when it flew within two and a half miles of the Lawrence.<sup>11</sup> As Iran claimed success in taking Iraq's Majnoon Islands oil field, a "high-ranking administration official" told the *Philadelphia Inquirer* that the administration was prepared to send ground troops to the Gulf.<sup>12</sup> In late March the *New York*

## Gulf oil fields and facilities

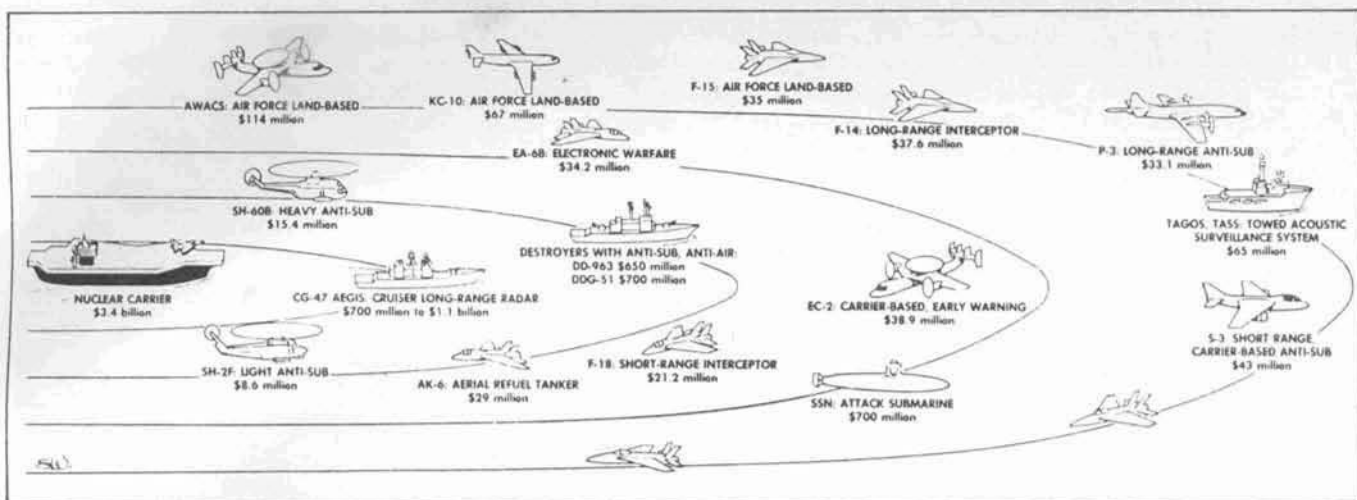


*Times* reported from Baghdad that "Western European diplomats assume that the United States now exchanges some intelligence on Iran with Iraq,"<sup>13</sup> and Saddam Hussein seemed to confirm this in early May when he told a Kuwaiti newspaper that "we have benefitted from the AWACs in Iraq."<sup>14</sup>

When the State Department's Richard Murphy visited the Gulf in April, he was accompanied by Rear Admiral John Poindexter, head of the Crisis Pre-planning Group within the NSC. Murphy's and Poindexter's message to the ruling families was that any US military intervention on their behalf against Iran would require a public invitation and full US access to their bases. Their mission was to obtain Gulf states' permission to store additional ammunition, fuel and weapons for use by a US intervention force. US military commanders had long maintained that the new Central Command (as the Rapid Deployment Force is now called) required land-based facilities and headquarters in the Arabian Peninsula, and the escalating war against the tankers represented another opportunity to secure Saudi acquiescence.

There are signs, though, that the administration remains divided over how far to escalate US intervention behind Iraq in order to consolidate the US military presence in the region. Some officials complain about Saudi resistance to a larger US ground presence there, while others favor a more cautious approach. "Arab reluctance will save us from our own impetuosity," was how one State Department official put it.<sup>15</sup> European governments have also warned Washington against indulging its impulse to "bash" Iran.<sup>16</sup> As a result, the US contented itself to send Saudi Arabia new "improved" AWACs able to track ships as well as aircraft, 400 largely symbolic Stinger anti-aircraft missiles and, more significantly, a USAF KC-10 aerial tanker. This was not needed to refuel the AWACs or Saudi F-15s. Several smaller KC-135s

<sup>8</sup>Federal investigators also cracked down at home, and in late March 1984 claimed to have halted an attempt by a Minnesota firm, E & F Marketing, Inc., to ship \$7 million in M-60 tank parts to Iran. (*Wall Street Journal*, March 28, 1984)



A carrier battle group patrols an area with a radius of up to 300 miles.

Washington Post

already there were handling this task. The KC-10, though, would enable US fighter bombers based on carriers in the Arabian Sea to attack Iranian targets in the northern Gulf.

The latest crisis has also forced Kuwait to re-evaluate its military ties with Washington. That country had until now declined to join the US-sponsored air defense network based around the AWACs. A US Central Command survey team visited Kuwait in June, and at the end of the month the administration announced Kuwait would buy millions of dollars worth of military equipment and would tie in with the Saudi air defense system.\* Regular flights of USAF C-48 cargo jets into Gulf airports suggest that some degree of pre-positioning of military equipment and supplies has been going on.<sup>17</sup>

At the same time, Washington has stepped up its tacit intervention on Iraq's behalf by providing US warships as tanker escorts, starting in the third week of May. Officially, the escorts are for tankers chartered by the Navy's Military Sealift Command to provide fuel for US forces at sea and abroad. The Pentagon asserts that only four US warships have been operating in the Gulf, but observers there believe there may be as many as 12.<sup>18</sup> The escorts are operating only in the southern, Arabian side of the Gulf, thus threatening to repulse Iranian but not Iraqi attacks; there have been no sightings of US tanker escorts in the vicinity of Kharg Island.

Washington's current view appears to be that any escalation of the tanker war should be handled initially by the air forces of the various Gulf states. "The feeling here is that they should get bloodied first," said one US official.<sup>19</sup> With 300 modern fighters (185 of these belonging to Saudi Arabia), these forces should be more than a match for Iran's 60 to 70 vintage Phantoms and handful of F-14s. The lack of a direct Iranian response to the loss of a Phantom in a June 5 dogfight with Saudi planes over the middle of the Gulf has encouraged the Pentagon in this view. As in the June 5 incident, US involvement in any such confrontation would be considerable, with the AWACs providing intelli-

gence and flight guidance and the aerial tankers providing refueling. Pentagon officials reportedly gave "mixed reviews" to the "Peninsula Shield" military exercises held by the Gulf Cooperation Council in late 1983. "The maneuvers showed us how far the Gulf states have come, but also how badly they need us," was one US official's verdict.<sup>20</sup> Other US regional allies outside the Gulf are also involved. In late June, Saudi defense officials met with Jordan's King Hussein, Pakistan's dictator Zia ul-Haq and the Egyptian chief of staff to discuss the war.<sup>21</sup> All three countries provide pilots, officers and military technicians to the Saudi and other Gulf military establishments.

There are two scenarios which pose the danger of direct US military intervention against Iran. One involves the likely consequences of an Iranian attack on US warships in the Gulf, especially in their tanker escort function, or against Saudi oil installations. This sort of incident would probably shift the balance in Washington decisively in favor of those who would like to repair the post-Lebanon prestige of the US at Iran's expense. Iran's very cautious behavior in the tanker war so far makes such a development unlikely but possible.

Prospects for such escalation depend much more on the outcome of the ground war, and particularly of the long-awaited Iranian attack on Basra. If Iraqi defenses hold, officials in Washington expect that increased oil exports through new pipelines after another year or so will enable the Saddam Hussein regime to repair its economy and political base.\* On the other hand, if Iran scores a significant breakthrough, Washington expects its long-awaited "invitation" from Riyadh to intervene directly. This would involve sending between two and four USAF F-15 squadrons to be based in Saudi Arabia. From there an air

\*A Kuwaiti request for Stinger missiles was rejected by Washington as not "suitable" to Kuwaiti defense needs. How those needs differed from Saudi needs was not made clear. The real reason may be that the inventory of Stingers had been completely depleted, and the Kuwaiti request could only be met by delving into US stocks. (*Washington Post*, June 20, 1984) The Kuwaitis responded by entertaining an offer from the Soviet Union for some \$2-300 million worth of air defense weapons systems.

\*The major new pipeline option now under consideration would run 540 miles from Iraqi oil fields to the Jordanian port of Aqaba. Washington has lent critical political and economic support to this project. Politically, the US has passed on to Baghdad "verbal assurances" that Israel would not attack the pipeline, which would run close to the Israeli border at its terminal point. Economically the administration persuaded an initially reluctant Export-Import Bank to guarantee \$425 million in US commercial loans for the project. Iraq expects to raise another \$500 million from European sources. The project includes a \$570 million contract for Bechtel Corporation, the corporate nest of Secretary of State George Shultz and Secretary of Defense Caspar Weinberger. Ex-Im Bank support was reportedly clinched by an Iraqi agreement to order \$100 million worth of US-made steel pipe instead of cheaper West German or Japanese steel for the pipeline itself. (*New York Times*, July 16, 1984)

offensive against Iranian air bases and troop concentrations would enable Iraq to hold its own in the land battles. "I feel confident that within minutes, we could certainly stabilize that situation border-wide," one US military official said in May.<sup>22</sup> This would represent the penultimate step in the "incremental" policy of escalation that

Washington has followed for the last year of this war. Do those US officials who talk of an intervention lasting "minutes" remember that this war was supposed to be over in a few weeks when Iraq sent its forces over the border in September 1980? ■

## Footnotes

<sup>1</sup> *Christian Science Monitor*, June 14, 1984.

<sup>2</sup> *Newsday*, May 20, 1984.

<sup>3</sup> *New York Times (NYT)*, October 12, 1980.

<sup>4</sup> *NYT*, October 8, 1980.

<sup>5</sup> Anthony Cordesman, *The Gulf and the Search for Strategic Stability* (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1984), p. 325.

<sup>6</sup> *Middle East Policy Survey (MEPS)*, May 11, 1983.

<sup>7</sup> *NYT*, March 20, 1981.

<sup>8</sup> *Washington Post (WP)*, April 14, 1982.

<sup>9</sup> *WP*, July 17, 1982.

<sup>10</sup> *WP*, June 1, 1984.

<sup>11</sup> *WP*, February 29, 1984.

<sup>12</sup> *Philadelphia Inquirer*, February 24, 1984.

<sup>13</sup> *NYT*, March 29, 1984.

<sup>14</sup> *Financial Times*, May 12, 1984.

<sup>15</sup> *MEPS*, June 18, 1984.

<sup>16</sup> *WP*, May 31 and June 6, 1984.

<sup>17</sup> *London Times*, June 8, 1984.

<sup>18</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>19</sup> *NYT*, May 27, 1984.

<sup>20</sup> *MEPS*, January 13, 1984.

<sup>21</sup> *NYT*, June 27, 1984.

<sup>22</sup> *Newsday*, May 20, 1984.

# West German Ties with Iran and Iraq

In July 1984, West German Foreign Minister Hans Dietrich Genscher visited Tehran, the highest-level Western official to do so in the five years since the Iranian revolution. Genscher reported that his hosts expressed strong interest in refurbishing Iran's ties with Europe and Japan. Germany's own trade links with the Islamic Republic are already considerable. In 1983, West German exports to Iran reached an all time high of DM 7.72 billion (DM 1.90 = \$1). The pre-revolutionary high had been at DM 6.77 billion in 1978, only to drop to DM 2.35 billion in 1979, the year the shah was deposed.

Since then, West German exports have increased steadily. *Der Spiegel* quotes Werner Blessing, president of the Deutsche Bank (one of the largest West German banks) as saying that Iran has become one of the "most interesting trading partners." The Iranians pay promptly and in cash, Blessing stated. Major commodities are vehicles (such as some 30 locomotives and 24,000 trucks in 1983), industrial machinery, chemicals and electronic equipment. Cigarettes, luxury goods and foodstuffs are exported as well.

According to the head of the German-Iranian chamber of Commerce in Tehran, Hans Ulrich Storz, the Iranian government has been able to

pay most of its foreign debt, in spite of the war, and the prospects for further business are good. West German companies seem to be running into one problem, though: While West German exports to Iran are climbing, imports have declined from DM 4.22 billion in 1978 to DM 1.57 billion in 1983. Only three percent of the oil imported by West Germany comes from Iran; other import items are caviar and carpets.

The Iranian government is not particularly happy about its DM 6.15 trade deficit with West Germany last year. A government commission is examining Iranian contracts with West German companies, and Tehran has warned the West Germans that they might lose some of their business if they don't buy more Iranian goods. The contracts West Germany has now, Storz believes, might then go to Japan, which is buying much of Iran's oil.

Closer West German ties to Iran have not prevented the German government from aiding Iraq's war effort. This year, some 25 Iraqi air force personnel are receiving military and technical training in West Germany. The training is sponsored jointly by the West German government, the arms corporation Dornier and the Carl-Duisberg Center in Saarbruecken, West Germany. The Center, administered by leading West German

corporate officials, is a training facility for West German specialists in Third World development and for Third World nationals preparing to take over management positions in Western-owned industrial projects in their home countries.

After attending a preparatory course at the Carl-Duisberg Center, the Iraqis will go on to practical training at Dornier; once their Dornier apprenticeship is completed, they move on to study at the West German equivalent of the US Army War College, the Bundeswehrhochschule.

The Dornier corporation has longstanding ties with the Iraqi government. Only months after Iraq's invasion of Iran, France supplied to the Iraqi air force 30 Alpha Jets jointly produced by Dornier and the French company Dessault-Breguet.

Iraq is also doing business with a Brazilian subsidiary of the West German steel and arms corporation Krupp. The subsidiary is selling armored personnel carriers to Iraq even though Iran has been a major shareholder of Krupp since the shah's time. This is reminiscent of Krupp's World War I experience, when the German-owned corporation profited from the war by simultaneously equipping the German military and supplying ammunition to Germany's enemy, England.

—Konrad Ege





E-3A "Sentry" airborne warning and control system aircraft over Clark Air Base, Philippines  
US Air Force

# Commanding the Center

Daniel Volman



**A**lthough President Carter pledged in January 1980 to "use any means necessary, including military force" to ensure "the free movement of Middle Eastern oil" and created the Rapid Deployment Force (RDF) for intervention in the Third World, the American military presence in the Middle East was still relatively small when President Reagan took office in January 1981.<sup>1</sup> Over the past three years, the Reagan Administration has substantially expanded the size and strength of American military forces surrounding the Middle East. Today, despite continued opposition from Congress and reservations of important US allies like Saudi Arabia, the United States now enjoys a significant and growing capability for armed intervention in the region.

The RDF has grown more than 50 percent over the past three years and been reorganized. Originally organized in March 1980 to "conduct pre-deployment planning and

training for conventional non-NATO contingencies," in October 1981 the RDF was given operational control over 200,000 combat and combat-support units from all four branches of the US armed forces.<sup>2</sup> In January 1983, the RDF was elevated to the status of an independent multi-service organization—the Central Command—with responsibility for what the Defense Department now calls the Central Area, a vast region centered on the Persian Gulf and stretching from Egypt to Pakistan. Now comprising nearly 300,000 men, the Central Command is composed of two airborne and one mechanized division from the Army; seven tactical fighter wings and two strategic bomber squadrons from the Air Force; a Marine amphibious assault division with its own air support; three Navy aircraft carrier-led battle groups; and specialized counter-insurgency units like the Rangers and the Green Berets. While most of these troops are still based in the United States, a significant number are already stationed

in Central Area and the Reagan Administration is currently engaged in an aggressive search for even more bases in the region.

An aircraft carrier-led battle group—with 4,000 Navy personnel and 1,800 Marines—is now permanently deployed in the Indian Ocean, and more than 1,000 troops from the Central Command (principally airborne units) have been stationed in the Sinai Peninsula as part of the multi-national peacekeeping force there since the Israeli withdrawal in April 1982. In addition to these garrisons, the Reagan Administration has organized an extensive network of military bases and other installations for the use of the Central Command in Morocco, Egypt, Turkey, Somalia, Kenya, Oman, and Bahrain.

In the Persian Gulf region, the most important of these bases are in Oman, at Thamarit, Sib, Khasab, and on the island of Masira. In the absence of major facilities in the Gulf itself, these bases would be used for troop billets and for land-based aircraft. Washington would prefer to use bases closer to the Gulf, since this would permit quicker responses and the use of short-range aircraft and helicopters. But the Omani facilities would still allow for the use of heavy land-based bomber and ground attack aircraft as well as for the use of paratroopers and mechanized infantry units. The US "administrative support unit" in Bahrain and the five warships based there have become the "forward command" for the Central Command.

Further out from the Gulf, Washington would use bases at Ras Banas and Qena in Egypt, at Mogadishu and Berbera in Somalia, at Mombasa and Nairobi in Kenya, and at Sidi Slimane in Morocco to transport soldiers and war materiel from the US to the gulf region. The US Navy uses Karachi harbor to monitor Gulf traffic and Pakistani supply ships provide rations for the US flotilla in the Gulf, according to a recent report from Pakistan.<sup>3</sup> US forces committed to NATO in Europe could also be brought into the area via bases in southern Turkey; a NATO exercise simulating such an intervention, code-named "Helix 84," was held earlier this year.<sup>4</sup>

The United States has also stockpiled enough weapons, ammunition, spare parts, food, and fuel to supply a division-sized force at the joint US-British base on Diego Garcia and on board 18 support ships in the Indian Ocean. According to Lieutenant-General Robert Kingston, head of the Central Command, this means that "I can commit US Marine Corps combat elements if they are in operation in the northern Indian Ocean within 48 hours. I can have an Army brigade in the area within four to five days, and I could have combat and combat support elements of a light division in the area within two weeks."<sup>5</sup>

The Reagan administration's efforts have not gone entirely unchallenged. In this time of budget cutting, the US Congress has not given the Administration all the funding it has requested to modernize and expand bases in the Central Area to which the United States had been granted access. In his proposed Fiscal Year 1985 Budget, Defense Secretary Weinberger requested \$109 million for military construction in Egypt, Oman, and Morocco. But this May, the House Armed Services Committee (citing budget constraints and the danger of a large American military presence in the region) cut a \$62 million budget request for Egypt and cut \$15 million from a \$42 million

budget request for Oman. In spite of the cuts, however, the United States has already spent nearly a billion dollars on military construction in the Central Area since 1979.

The other main obstacle to the administration's military buildup in the region has been the reluctance of the most important US ally in the region—Saudi Arabia—to allow Washington full use of its military bases and other facilities, which are vital to American intervention operations in the Persian Gulf. The Saudis view Iran and internal dissidents as the main threat in the region, not the Soviet Union, and wish to avoid provoking further Soviet involvement in the region. The Iran-Iraq war has led to a closer military relationship between Saudi Arabia and the United States, manifested most recently in the shipment of Stinger anti-aircraft missiles to Saudi Arabia and most clearly the deployment of AWACs radar patrol planes and aerial refueling aircraft along the Persian Gulf. The Saudis depend on the direct participation of US troops and technicians to provide intelligence on military activities in the Gulf from the American AWACs radar patrol planes and to maintain sophisticated military equipment like the F-15 fighters which clashed with Iranian jets. Saudi bases

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Category	Strength
Division	16,800 (airborne)
Squadron	18,500 (mechanized)
Tactical Fighter Wing	18-24 aircraft
	3 squadron (approximately)

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have been "overbuilt" to accommodate US intervention forces. But the Saudi government still wishes to avoid deeper direct American involvement. It has so far rejected pressure from Washington to permit American combat aircraft to use Saudi bases or to let American troops play a direct offensive military role in the Gulf. So far the Saudi government has sought to create a military alliance of Gulf states capable of defending the oil route without direct American participation, but if the Iran-Iraq War continues to expand or escalate, or if it provokes internal conflict within the Gulf states, the Gulf alliance will facilitate direct American intervention rather than prevent it.

Neither Congressional nor Saudi opposition, therefore, seems adequate to stop, much less reverse, the American military buildup in the Middle East, particularly if President Reagan wins a second term. The risks of an expanding American military presence have been vividly demonstrated in Lebanon, where the bombing of the US Embassy and the Marine compound eventually provoked a public demand for US withdrawal which the Reagan administration could not ignore. As the aerial clash in May between Saudi and Iranian jet fighters showed, military crises in the Middle East can escalate rapidly, and the next crisis may not leave time for public opposition to develop before it erupts into a larger war. This is why a public campaign to reverse the present military buildup in the Middle East is necessary now. ■

See Volman, page 64

# Reviews

## Iraq's Transition to Capitalism

Marion Farouk-Sluglett

*Al-Dawla w'al-Tatawwur al-Ra'smali fi'l-'Iraq, 1968-1979*

By 'Isam al-Khafaji. Cairo, 1984.

'Isam al-Khafaji is a distinguished Iraqi economist who studied at Baghdad University under Muhammad Salman Hasan in the early 1970s. After leaving Iraq in 1978, he studied for a year in Paris before settling in Beirut. There he published his first book, *Ra'smaliyya al-Dawla al-Wataniyya (National State Capitalism)*, which is a Marxist analysis of aspects of economic development with special reference to the oil states of the Middle East.

This latest book was written during the Israeli invasion of Lebanon, and completed in Cyprus in the early months of 1983. Apart from the obvious physical constraints imposed by having to write under such conditions, the author has faced the problem shared by others writing about Iraq in more favorable circumstances, namely the virtual absence of reliable, detailed and verifiable data. Despite these obstacles, al-Khafaji has produced a highly informative, stimulating and timely analysis of contemporary Iraqi society, and in the process he has given us an extremely perceptive review of the role of the state in developing societies. He has made full use of the available statistical material, but has also been able to supplement this with extensive detailed information on the 75 richest and most influential families in the country, largely through interviews. This part of the book is obviously the most informative, given the very great shortage of detailed empirical evidence of this kind, and the author gives us a tentative but lucid analysis of the role of these families within society, and their relationship, direct or indirect, to political power.

Al-Khafaji's analytical framework is highly complex, and it is difficult to do adequate justice to his work in a short review. His main thesis is that Iraqi society is passing through a period of transition from precapitalist to capitalist relations of production, in the course of which a full-fledged home market has emerged. This process has accelerated particularly since the revolution of 1958, and even more sharply since the nationalization of oil in 1972, after which the vast increase in oil revenues transformed the state itself into the most important source of economic surplus in society. As a result, state expenditure has become the fundamental source of demand within the economy, and the state itself the economy's largest cus-

tommer (p. 14). This theme is elaborated in detail throughout the book. Although al-Khafaji accepts that, at least in the initial stages, the state has a certain degree of autonomy, he emphasizes that the process of accumulation of private capital which inevitably accompanies state expenditure and consumption leads to the formation of a social base for the state, which thus loses its relative autonomy. In Iraq, of course, this process took place very rapidly because of the rapid expansion of state investment.

One result of this has been the total transformation of the structure of the labor force (p. 61). By 1977, at least 60 percent of the active population—then about 1 million, excluding those engaged in agriculture—derived all or part of their income from within the framework of the private sector (pp. 44-45). Incidentally, "government employees" (the remaining 40 percent) do not include anyone employed in the military industrial establishment, about which no information is available at all. Al-Khafaji underpins his analysis with several tables covering a variety of aspects of the labor force in the different sectors. The fact that the Iraqi working class constituted one-third of the labor force at the end of the 1970s is itself another important indicator of the development of capitalist relations of production (pp. 47-52). The majority of the labor force is absorbed within the private sector, and it is the private sector, in competition with the government, which actually determines the price of labor in the market.

In his analysis of the social classes which emerge in the course of this process, the author draws particular attention to the role of local and foreign contracting and subcontracting companies in the construction and communications sector, probably the most lucrative areas within the private sector as a whole. The predominant role of these activities at this stage is another indication of the transitional nature of this development (p. 77). Al-Khafaji notes that since the mid-1970s, out of a sample of 31 contractors, a high proportion have begun to invest in construction-related industries—sometimes employing as many as 500 workers—making concrete blocks, tiles, asphalt and similar materials. Al-Khafaji's rigorous and detailed review of the social and regional origins of the 75 richest families in contemporary Iraq reveal that this group is both more heterogeneous in religious and regional terms, and less closely linked to the ruling party, than the contractors.

In his final chapter, al-Khafaji argues that the new bourgeoisie was the most direct beneficiary of the economic



policies pursued by the state. This new bourgeoisie originate primarily from the middle and lower ranks of the "traditional" bourgeoisie. These elements competed with and to some extent resented the old "colonial" bourgeoisie, which, together with the great landowners, had blocked their upward advance (p. 221). An exception to this trend seems to have been the older nationalist families (mainly industrialist and often from Mosul) who have managed to benefit particularly from the new developments which have taken place since 1968. In fact, it seems that within the space of a single decade the new bourgeoisie has been able to accumulate tremendous wealth and capital and to emerge as a significant economic force able to preempt any program put forward by the government which might not take sufficient account of their economic interests (p.198).

Hence the state has created, so to speak, its own social base. This is not located within the bureaucracy—although its links with the bureaucracy should not be overlooked (p.201)—but within the indigenous bourgeoisie itself. Accompanying this with a historical analysis, al-Khafaji rejects the notion of the petty bourgeois state in general and in the Iraqi context in particular, taking issue here with Hanna Batatu and Joe Stork. He concludes that the crucial question in such an analysis must be the identification of the dominant class in a given social formation. This means that although the social background of individual members of a regime is by no means unimportant, this cannot be regarded as the decisive factor. Having made this clear, al-Khafaji traces the origins of the most important supporters of the regime back to the "Sunni triangle" (pp.213-219), in particular to the small towns on the Euphrates. There, socioeconomic relations were quite different from those prevailing in the south, around Kut and 'Amara, because of the virtual absence of large landownership. He also traces the careers of important personalities within the regime, and shows that most leading Ba'thists have in fact been ousted over the years, leaving Saddam Hussein's family rather than "the Takritis" in power (p.219). Although individuals from other families and areas are not totally excluded, decisive positions are held by the family and its very closest friends.

Al-Khafaji also carried out a survey of small (*i.e.*, less than ten workers) enterprises. He observes that this category has undergone the most expansion since 1975, and that the total value added of these small firms is double that of the sum of all the larger firms within the private sector. It would have been interesting to have more information on this, especially in the context of his observation (p. 107) that the owners of these small establishments tend to open up other similar-sized workshops rather than to expand production in any one of them.

In the latter chapters of the book, al-Khafaji investigates the changing nature of Iraq's relations with the world market. In the course of the decade which the book covers, Iraq has exchanged economic for technological dependence; the war and its aftermath will almost certainly see the return of the first kind of dependence, and the reinforcement of the second. Al-Khafaji's challenging and thought-provoking book is a major contribution to the study of contemporary Iraq, and of wider issues concerning the nature of the state in the Middle East. ■

## **Politics and Society in Early Modern Iraq: Mamluk Pashas, Tribal Shaykhs, and Local Rule Between 1802 and 1831.**

By Tom Nieuwenhuis. The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff Publishers, 1981.

This is a reasoned and illuminating analysis, by a young Dutch scholar, of Iraq in the three closing decades of the Mamluk era.

A clear picture of the structure of Mamluk power emerges here. At the core of the Mamluk government stood a group which, apart from the ruling pasha, consisted of his kinsmen and political friends. From these were drawn the chief administrative officers. The group formed the center of a broader social network which embraced the partners of these officers and of the ruling family (other high officials or religious dignitaries), inferior associates (money-dealers and big merchants), and numerous clients, including artisans and soldiers. The whole network risked grievous loss upon the fall of a ruling pasha by dint of its strong dependence upon his personal fate.

This was accentuated by a crucial structural aspect of Mamluk society: the interlacing of the spheres of economic wealth and political power. The accumulation of wealth was difficult without personal influence at the Mamluk court or involvement in particular power networks. Any change in the existing balance of political power, therefore, directly affected the distribution of landed, commercial, and fiscal rights. Many of these rights tended in consequence to be temporary, which in turn hindered the development of a stable local aristocracy.

Moreover, because large economic interests were immediately at stake, political succession struggles tended to assume intensely violent forms. Violence added to the political instability which was inherent in the thin social base of the power of most of the Mamluk rulers. Through its encouragement of rival forces and its preference for weak pashas, traditional Ottoman provincial policy also promoted instability. The discontinuous or unsteady control by the Mamluks of important tribal confederations and the intrigues in Kurdistan by the neighboring and militarily stronger Kermanshah were additional destabilizing elements. All these factors tended to keep the economy and the state at "an undeveloped level."

The author throws into sharp relief one other point: the mutual interests that tied the tribes to the Mamluk state. The high officials in Baghdad traded with the riverain shaikhs, and both groups had a common stake in orderly and secure transactions. There was also a significant exchange of goods between nomadic tribes and market towns. Moreover, just as the government drew strength from the support of a big shaikh, his endorsement by the state enhanced his tribal overlordship. These considerations lead the author to doubt that the relationship between the tribes and the Mamluk state was generally one of conflict.

Unfortunately there is not much in Nieuwenhuis' study about the conditions of the peasants, artisans, and other "little people" in the Mamluk era. This is due to the neglect of these classes by his sources rather than to his lack of interest in them.

For his data, Nieuwenhuis relied on published books,

unpublished theses, and French consular and commercial correspondence. He has not consulted the British or Ottoman archives. It is doubtful that an examination of these archives will lead to a fundamentally different picture of Mamluk Iraq than the one he presents here.

Some of Nieuwenhuis' observations have to be qualified or need clarification. For example, at one point (p. 113) he maintains that "the social position of the cultivators was not reduced to that of servitude." This was true of most but not of all the tillers of the soil in the Mamluk period. One of the better informed of the British residents, C. J. Rich of the East India Company, observed, after touring Kurdistan in 1820-21, that the conditions of the non-tribal peasants in that area "much resembles that of Negro slaves in the West Indies." At another point (p. 171), Nieuwenhuis describes the re-establishment of direct Ottoman control in 1831 as "the unwelcome restoration of alien rule in Baghdad." While it may be granted that large segments of the population of Baghdad favored the Mamluks over the Ottomans, it is doubtful that they regarded the Ottomans as "aliens." On page 28, Nieuwenhuis identifies the muftis merely as "the leaders of both Moslem sects," without indicating in the preceding or succeeding passages the sects to which he was referring. As there are more than two legal sects in Islam, he should have made clear that he had the Hanafis and Shafi'is in mind.

There are also some misspellings of Arabic names or terms. The military and commercial tribe that had a monopoly on caravan protection was called "Uqayl" (pronounced "Ugayl") and not "Aqil." "Rifa'i" and not "Rafa'i," "Jubur" and not "Jabur" are the correct patronyms. "Tahar" should read "tghar" (two tons).

But all these are minor points, and should not detract from what is a significant contribution to our knowledge of the history of Iraq.

—Hanna Batatu

### The Iran-Iraq War

Edited by M.S. el-Azhary. London and New York: Croom Helm and St. Martin's Press, 1984. 144 pages. £14.95 and \$22.50.

This volume comprises papers presented at a conference organized by the Universities of Exeter and Basra, at Exeter in July 1982, together with an introduction and conclusion written in the spring or summer of 1983. Some of the contributions thus have a rather dated air. John Duke Anthony, for example, thought that it was "unlikely that the Gulf states [would] be able to finance Iraq in the period ahead" in the way that they had in the first two years of the war (p. 110), when in fact their munificence shows no immediate signs of abating.

Given the provenance of the collection, readers will not be surprised at the absence of contributions from an Iranian perspective or dealing very fully with Iran. There are some attempts to analyze the effect of the conflict on the Iraqi economy, and to a lesser extent on the Iranian, generally in the context of oil. There are virtually no references to political or social affairs in either country. Another curious feature for a publication emanating from an academic symposium is the general lack of

footnotes or references. Only the contributions by Mustafa al-Najjar and Najdat Fathi Safwat on the Shatt al-'Arab in the 18th century, and by el-Azhary on the superpowers, are properly footnoted. Thus Anthony makes tantalizing references to Israel's collaboration with Iran without any indication of where his information comes from.

The first two historical essays, on the antecedents of the Shatt dispute (Peter Hünseler) and the Ka'bid dynasty in the Shatt region (al-Najjar and Safwat) attempt to show the continuity of an Arab presence on the "east Shatt al-Arab," which is thus considered "an integral part of Iraq" (p. 31). This claim would benefit from more rigorous documentation, and some of Hünseler's introductory remarks deserved more careful editing: thus the Buyids came to Baghdad in 945, not 954, and the Safavids cannot really be considered to have founded the first separate Shi'i state, an honor which belongs to the Carmathians, or the Zaydis of Yemen, or the Fatimids, all of whom preceded the Safavids by at least seven centuries.

The economic chapters by David Long, John Townsend and Basil al-Bustany contain some useful tables, particularly the detailed breakdown of Iranian and Iraqi oil production (pp. 45-46) and Iraqi public sector spending in 1980-82. (pp. 60-62) But they do not seem sufficiently aware of the fact that the private sector was already booming before September 1980, and that developments since then are very much a continuation of previous practice rather than major departures. Thus Townsend's characterization

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of the Iraqi regime as "strong centralized public sector *dirigisme*" (p. 64) is something of an oversimplification, at least in the context of the period since 1977. Bustany's description of Iraq as an "independent economy" (p. 66) is difficult to square with contemporary realities.

The three papers on regional and international aspects, by G.H. Jansen, el-Azhary and Anthony, suffer particularly from having been written two years ago. Jansen's characterization of the war as having a "racial basis since it is a dispute between Semitic Arabs and Aryan Persians" (p. 81) is typical of his other animadversions on the conflict. El-Azhary and Anthony both overlook or underplay the very clear community of interest between the United States and Iraq, a factor which has been apparent since well before the conflict began. Indeed, it is not too fanciful to suggest that Iraq's decision to start the conflict was encouraged by the United States, who wanted to take advantage of the confusion in Iran to replace Khomeini by Shahpur Bakhtiar, who was in Baghdad at the time of the September 1980 invasion.

This collection adds little to the current state of knowledge or analysis of this tragic conflict. Perhaps its major weakness is the one-sided nature of almost all the contributions—"one-sided" not in the sense of "partisan," but in the sense that the discussion is so superficial that an important dimension is almost entirely lacking. Furthermore, the quality and, on occasion, the accuracy of some of the pieces is not always of a decent academic standard.

—Peter Sluglett

### **The Iran-Iraq War: New Weapons, Old Conflicts**

Edited by Shirin Tahir-Kheli and Shaheen Ayubi. New York: Praeger Publishers, 1983.

### **Iraq & Iran: Roots of Conflict**

By Tareq Y. Ismael. New York: Syracuse University Press, 1982.

Much of the growing literature on the Iran-Iraq war is devoted to how the conflict has affected oil exports from the Gulf or the geopolitical designs of the United States in the area. The books under review are exceptional in that they concentrate on the national and regional perceptions, objectives and priorities of the principal protagonists.

Part I of the Kheli and Ayubi volume focuses on the causes of the war. The most original contribution to this section is an essay by Richard W. Bulliet, who argues quite persuasively that "the conflict between Iran and Iraq is mirrored, below surface, by suppressed conflicts within each country." The essays in Part II address the impact of the war on the internal politics of Iran and Iraq, as well as the interaction of the regional and global actors in the conflict. Claudia Wright's contribution, "Neutral or Neutralized? Iraq, Iran, and the Superpowers," demonstrates how the war has intensified instability and insecurity in the area and in this way revived the historical conditions of dependency for the countries there.

Tareq Ismael's introductory essay investigates the historical, legal and ideological aspects of the war. His first appendix presents ten documents concerning the background of territorial disputes between Iran and Iraq. The second appendix consists of nine ideological and political documents exhibiting the sources of rivalry and

confrontation between the two countries. To the extent that governmental records and statements can shed light on the character of international conflicts, Ismael's book is undoubtedly helpful in understanding the Iran-Iraq war. One must bear in mind, however, that what such documents conceal is often more important than what they reveal.

The essential weakness of both books lies in their deterministic treatment of the conflict. They perceive the war as if it were an earthquake whose eruption was unrelated to human choice. The causes of the hostilities are presumed to be structural and impersonal. The fact that the clash of ambitions between two expansionist absolute rulers, Ayatollah Khomeini and Saddam Hussein, played the decisive role in the outbreak of the war and continues to hinder a negotiated settlement has escaped Mr. Ismael and the authors of the anthology.

—Mansour Farhang

### **Communism and Agrarian Reform in Iraq**

By Rony Gabbay

London: Croom Helm, 1978.

Modern Iraqi history suffers from a lack of monographs and case studies on subjects such as rural affairs. Rony Gabbay's research helps to fill this vacuum, at least in the area of social and political developments in the countryside and their relation to communism and agrarian reform. Published in 1978, even today Gabbay's is an important source for the history of the Iraqi Communist Party.

Gabbay provides useful information on the socio-economic position of the rural classes (pp. 25-39), and a clear picture of their severe oppression. His title may be too general; he is mainly concerned with the pre-1963 period, but he gives an interesting summary of the Iraqi Communist Party's statements and policy in the pre-Ba'ath period. The ICP emerges as largely unprepared for the 1958 upheaval, in the sense that the party had no transitional program and no clear agrarian program.

Gabbay's book is among the few studies one can recommend on modern Iraq. It does, though, have one serious shortcoming. To judge communist policy with regard to the agrarian question, it is first of all necessary to analyze the political situation in the countryside and the political position of the lower rural classes with regard to shaikhs, state, the national revolution and agrarian reform. Little is said about the organizing capacity of the *fellahin*, of their relationship to the means of production, of their dependence on shaikhs and urban landowners and about the relationship between urban and rural opposition. Important regional differences are largely neglected. Gabbay's judgement of the ICP's policy lacks a basic pillar of investigation, and this is not offset by his insightful and lengthy citations from ICP program statements and party discussions.

This shortcoming has its consequences. Gabbay's critique of the unpreparedness of the ICP in 1958 is justifiable, but this cannot be said of all his judgements with regard to the party's role in land reform. In 1958 the ICP was hardly represented in the countryside, at least in terms of organized support, and this was a significant element in



the balance of power between conservative and progressive forces in that decisive year. Gabbay does not seem to appreciate the hesitations of communist officials in implementing the distribution of land among the still highly dependent lower classes; these were not totally unjustified. The problem was not so much that the creation of petty landowners contradicted certain schools of communist thought; it could have no real success if Qassem and the ICP could not adequately control and protect a large-scale land reform. The revolution of 1958 was an urban affair in the sense that it did not immediately destroy the power of shaikhs and landowners. Gabbay almost blames the communists for the land reform failure. Land reform, however, is not a short-term process and the communists were in power only during a brief period of some months. By not investigating the structural difficulties of the agrarian situation, which were beyond the powers of the party, Gabbay's analysis takes on strong voluntaristic overtones.

—Tom Nieuwenhuis

### Religion and Politics in Iran: Shi'ism from Quietism to Revolution

Edited by Nikki R. Keddie. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1983. 235 pages.

This collection of ten essays deals with the political role of Iran's Shi'i clergymen from a historical perspective. The studies by W. Montgomery Watt, Juan Cole, Azar Tabari and Willem Floor are the most interesting and substantive, in that they dispel some of the common myths about Shi'ism. For example, while Shi'ism is closely associated with Iran, it was not until the 16th century that it became the religion of the majority of the people. Prior to that time, Shi'ism was a minority sect whose clergy sought to accommodate Sunni rulers in order to protect their followers. Only after the Safavid dynasty elevated Shi'ism to the status of an official state religion did many of the practices now identified with Shi'ism begin gradually to evolve. The role of the clergy as opponents of the government developed late in the 19th century. Both Tabari and Floor point out that clerical opposition to the Qajar and Pahlavi shahs was based upon resistance to various government-sponsored reforms which the clergy perceived as threatening their traditional status in society. At various times, Shi'i clerics were willing to make expedient alliances with progressive forces, as during the revolution of 1978-79, but they never accepted any need for social reforms and readily turned against their allies when immediate political goals had been achieved.

—Eric Hooglund

**The Palestine Aid Society of America, which supports social welfare, health and educational projects for Palestinian and Lebanese war victims, is holding its third national convention in Washington, DC, on September 7-9. Among the speakers will be noted Israeli defense attorney Felicia Langer. For further information, contact the PAS national office at 1051 Penobscot Building, Detroit, MI 48226 (313) 961-7252.**

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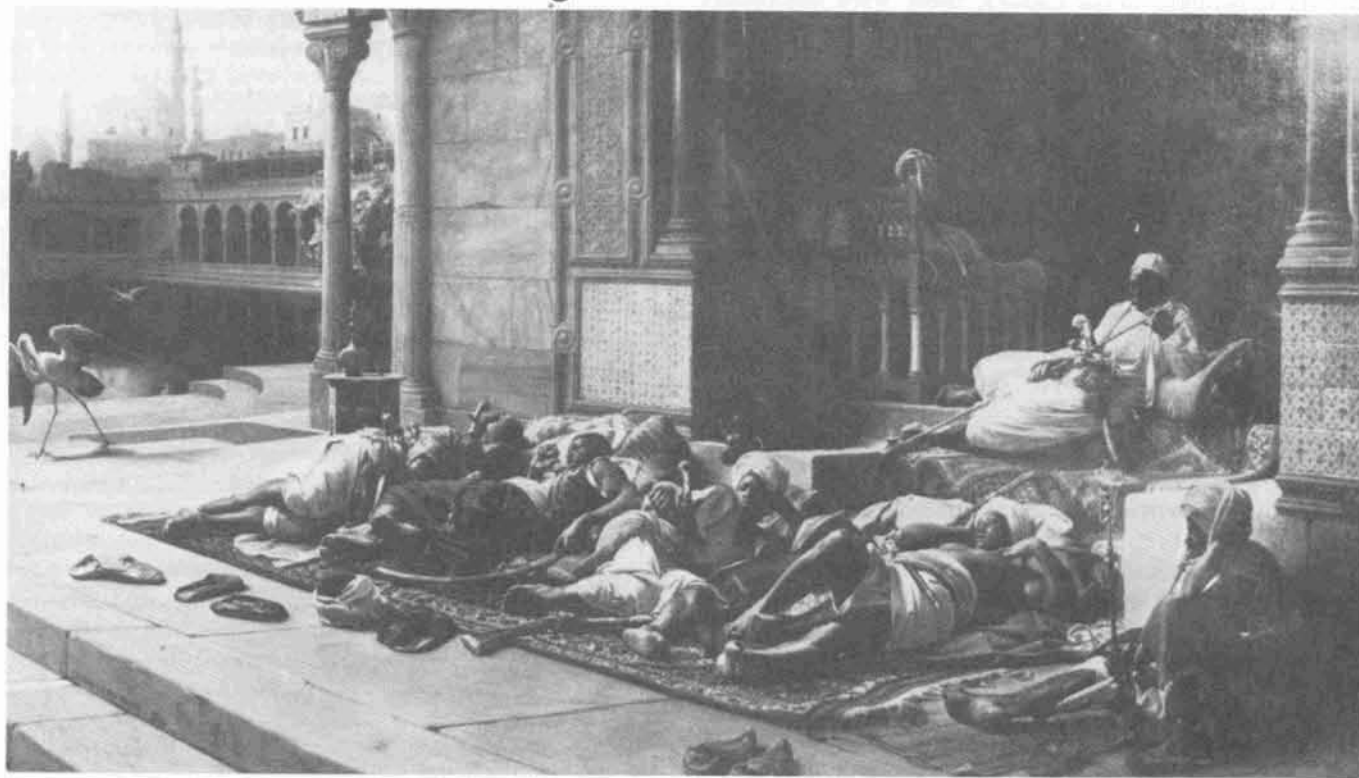
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# Review Essay



Jules-Jean-Antoine Lecomte-du-Nouy, *The Guard of the Seraglio* (1876)

## Orientalism in Color

Sarah Graham-Brown

### **The Orientalists: Delacroix to Matisse The Allure of North Africa and the Near East**

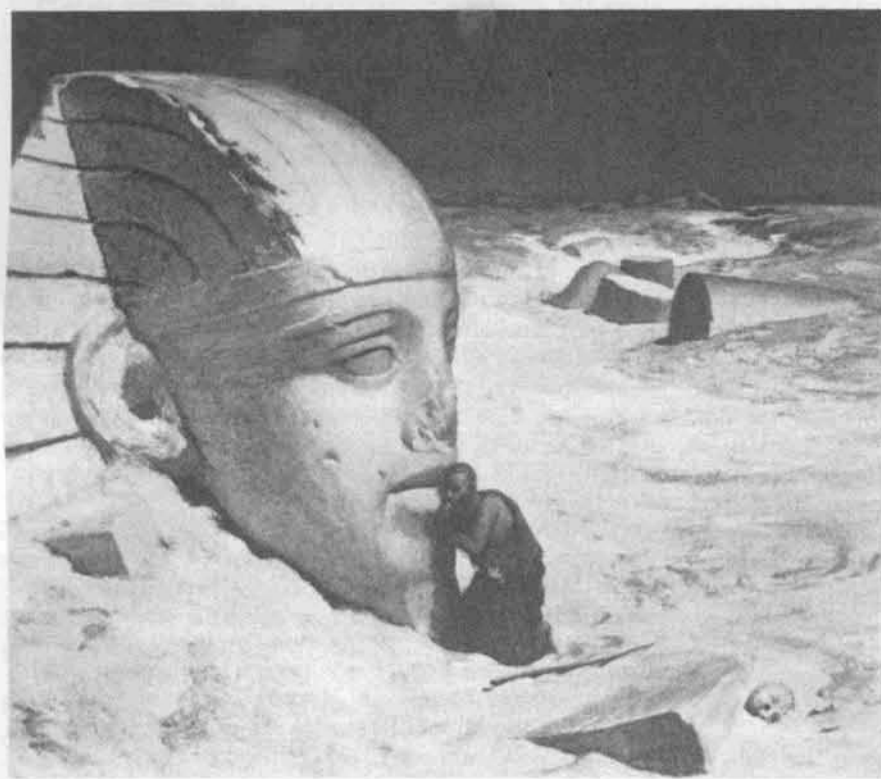
Edited by Mary Anne Stevens. Washington, DC: National Gallery of Art, in association with Weidenfeld and Nicolson, London. 235 pages.

Nowhere is 19th century Europe's vision of the Middle East expressed so vividly—at times even luridly—as in the work of its painters. Their canvases reveal how Orientalism created what Edward Said calls "an imaginative geography" of the region. A large exhibition entitled *The Orientalists, 1798-1914* showed earlier this year at London's Royal Academy and in July opened at the National Gallery in Washington. This sampling of "imaginative geography" as portrayed by British and continental artists covers a

variety of artistic styles and schools of painting—romantics, realists, pre-Raphaelites, impressionists and early modernists. It spans the century of Europe's imperialist expansion in the Middle East, beginning with Napoleon's invasion of Egypt and ending with the impending collapse of the Ottoman Empire and its division between Britain and France.

In the opening article of the catalogue, Mary Ann Stevens, the exhibition's organizer in London, discusses how painters as different as Delacroix and Matisse approach what they perceived as the "exotic." She argues that

The exhibition also confronts the issues raised by Orientalism, which cut across the chronology of European painting, such as the various attempts to evoke an exotic,



Elihu Vedder, *The Questioner of the Sphinx* (1863)

remote world, and the artistic solutions to the challenge of depicting unfamiliar terrain, customs, light and colour. (p. 15)

She does not deal with the question of whether the painters shared certain intellectual preconceptions about the Orient. Thus she defines Orientalism in rather a different manner from that of Said.

Stevens appears to accept this concept of the exotic as a given which requires artistic expression, where Said sees it as an intellectual or ideological notion to be challenged. Said does not examine Orientalist painting in his book, preferring to focus on the written word, but at one point he remarks in passing:

Later in the nineteenth century, in the works of Delacroix and literally dozens of other French and British painters, the Oriental genre tableau carried representation into visual expression and a life of its own. . . . Sensuality, promise, terror, sublimity, idyllic pleasure, intense energy ... (p. 119)

All these elements can be found in the paintings in this exhibition. Certainly we cannot view these works outside the context of Europe's political and economic relationship with the Middle East in that century. This atmosphere, as well as preconceptions about "the Orient" undoubtedly affected the views of the ever-growing number of European visitors to "the Levant" and North Africa. Painters were probably little different from the other tourists. Few spent long periods of time in the Middle East. The Scottish landscape painter David Roberts spent a total of eleven months travelling Egypt, Palestine and Syria in 1838-9. Fromentin made several trips to Algeria in the 1840s and 1850s but Delacroix's prolific output of orientalist works was based on one visit to North Africa. Many others made only the briefest of excursions.



Auguste Renoir, *Girl with a Falcon* (1880)



Said's observation that the literature and scholarship dealing with the Middle East occupied itself far more with its past than its present is also evident in these paintings. The contemporary state of political and social affairs in the Middle East was anyhow not the main preoccupation. According to Stevens, the choice of paintings sought to exclude, in the main, paintings with directly historical themes, since "they involved the historical reconstruction of the Orient rather than a commitment, in varying degrees to direct observation of the contemporary culture." (p. 15) This seems disingenuous, given the paintings chosen. They may purport to show contemporary scenes, yet they are clearly intended to evoke resonances of Biblical, ancient Egyptian or classical themes. In fact, a few pages further into her introduction, Stevens refers to Delacroix's view of Maghrebis as "paradoxically, the reincarnation of the classical ideal of Greece and Rome." Delacroix wrote, "Imagine, my friend, what it is to see figures of the Age of the Consuls, Catos, Brutuses seated in the sun, walking in the streets, mending old shoes . . . The Antique has nothing that is more beautiful." (p. 19)

## Preoccupations

If the past is often imposed on the present in the *suqs* of Cairo or in the courtyards of Algerian merchants' houses, so the concerns of Christianity along with a variety of other European ideological and moral preoccupations are introduced into what seem at first sight to be portrayals of Middle Eastern life. Malcolm Warner, in his catalogue article "The Question of Faith: Orientalism, Christianity and Islam" comments that

The Orientalist painter was not an innocent eye. His vision of the Near East was conditioned by his own concerns as a European and a Christian. Looked at from the religious point of view, as from others, Orientalism tells us something about the Near East but far more about the state of mind of nineteenth century Europe. (p. 39)

Thus Joseph-Florentin-Leon Bonnat could paint a picture entitled "An Egyptian Peasant Woman and Her Child" which not only presents a highly romanticized picture of poverty overlaid with voluptuousness but also refers to Christian iconography. According to the catalogue, "The complex but graceful pose of the two figures echo that of a madonna and child and refer back to his *Ascension de la Vierge* painted in 1868 for St. Andre, Bayonne." (p. 118)

Sometimes a Christian reference is inserted into a painting of a Muslim religious occasion. For instance, in a work by Leon-Adolphe-Auguste Belly entitled "Pilgrims going to Mecca" the catalogue notes that in one corner of the painting is a woman and a child on a donkey, an allusion to the biblical flight to Egypt. Other paintings, for example, Delacroix's "Fanatics of Tangier" evokes a vision of Islam as wild and frenzied, bringing fear even to the onlookers in the painting. This contrasts with Gerome's more sober and dignified treatment of the Sufis in "The Whirling Dervishes."

As Ward points out, there were many nuances and even ambiguities in Western attitudes to Islam. Not every painting expresses denigration, hostility, or even directly

gives the images another meaning. He argues that "for many the principal attraction of the Islamic world was its supposed voluptuousness." But again

the Orientalist portrayal of all male gatherings of Muslims at prayer must just seem a corollary to the idea of the Muslim as lord of the harem, an apotheosis of the men's club. This may well be part of the meaning of the subject, but it seems to have carried other genuinely religious implications as well.

Ward argues that those paintings which offer a more respectful view of Muslim worship reflected a view of Islam as a pure and simple religion, with a cleanness of spirit reminiscent of earlier ages of Christianity. Such a vision would appeal to those who saw 19th century Christianity as corrupted or institutionalized. Thus Islam is appropriated to reflect the needs and concerns of Western Christianity.

## Fascinations

This romantic and nostalgic view extends to wider issues of European culture. For those who rejected the decadence of industrializing society in Europe found in the desert dwellers of the Middle East a vision of life free from such complexities. Among writers, Wilfred Scawen Blunt and later T.E. Lawrence and Wilfred Thesiger exhibited the grip of this romanticism. Among painters it is particularly evident in the work of Eugene Girardet, for whom the deserts of North Africa held a great fascination reaching, it seems, beyond the artistic challenge of responding to new kinds of light and color. Another version of this romanticism is found in the paintings of the pre-Raphaelites. Holman Hunt's two paintings entitled "Afterglow in Egypt" evince a nostalgia for a sensual, fruitful peasant life. At the same time, Hunt was expressing another kind of nostalgia common in this era for the glories of ancient Egypt. The peasant woman he paints expresses his feeling that "although the meridian glory of ancient Egypt has passed away, there is still a poetic reflection of this in the aspect of life there."

Thus portrayals of "Oriental" subjects, whether people, landscapes or monuments are often imbued with a significance which does not intrinsically belong to them. While it is in the nature of artistic creation that the painter should treat his/her subject according to individual perceptions within a given style, what is striking about this particular genre of painting is the constant sense of the artists' desires to enlist the subjects to serve particular preoccupations. Nowhere is this more evident than in the transfer of Western male sexual fantasies and repressed desires to the female "Oriental." Said discusses this phenomenon in some detail in his treatment of Flaubert, and much of this interpretation applies to these paintings. The odalisque (female slave or concubine) is one of the commonest subjects—examples in this exhibition include paintings by Ingres, Benjamin-Constant, Matisse and Renoir. Their vastly different stylistic approaches all evoke a vision of sensuality and promise.

The harem and the Turkish bath were also a great source of fascination to painters, though few can even have

been inside either. Stevens comments that

It is symptomatic of the strength of this image that, despite the heightened interest in the truthful representation of the Near East and North Africa in the nineteenth century, the harem, the bath and the guard to the seraglio remained amongst the most popular manifestations of orientalism in both painting and literature. (p. 18)

These scenes were usually reconstructed in the studio, using models. If the paintings were executed in the Middle East, these were apparently often Jewish women, if not Europeans. A striking feature of many of the interiors is that great attention is paid to the details of the decor—tiles, carved doors, carpets, textiles. Sometimes more detail is lavished on the furniture and costumes than on the faces of the people. Some painters, for instance the Austrian Ludwig Deutsch, kept a large collection of "Oriental" objects—tiles, *mashrabiyya* and carpets—in his studios in France for use in this type of painting. In this exhibition almost all the portraits of named individuals are of Europeans, several—including David Roberts and T.E. Lawrence—in Arab dress, while portraits of Arab subjects are "types"—a fellah, an Egyptian woman, and so on.

Another genre of painting which treated Middle Eastern locales at this time was landscape painting of the region's deserts, mountains, castles and ancient monuments. Prominent among these was David Roberts, best known for water colors and lithographs of the great historical sites of the Middle East. While accuracy of detail was not always the primary concern of such artists, they did help to record the antiquities and past architectural glories of Egypt, Turkey, Palestine and Syria in which Orientalist scholars in Europe took such an interest. They also helped to popularize the decorative motifs from these antiquities, especially from Egypt, which were to find their way into decorative work on British and European architecture of the late 19th century and into the productions of entire schools of design. This role of recording the treasures of the Orient had largely passed to photography by the latter part of the century. In fact, photography was first introduced into the Middle East in the 1840s expressly to record Egyptian antiquities.

Said has argued that the whole range of European (at least British and French) thought and perception and its political/economic actions related to the Middle East represented "one dynamic and creative process."<sup>\*</sup> The relationship between this intellectual climate and imperialist policies may be rather more complex than Said suggests, and the power of the Orientalist scholars and the artists who followed their ideas may be less hegemonic than his argument implies. Nonetheless, the Orientalist genre in painting as in the other arts does project a coherence of underlying attitudes and ideas which even cuts across the very different worlds of British and French artistic culture. Stevens' contention that the confrontation between Europe and the Middle East took the form of a "dialogue" rather than a "discourse" rests on the argument that European painting styles were influenced, even changed, by the impact of the artists' contact with Middle

Eastern culture. Yet the question remains as to whether this impact was produced by the culture itself, or by the mingling of the artist's often fleeting personal experience of it, with certain "Orientalist" notions. Second, the idea of a "dialogue" assumes that both European and Middle Eastern culture were ascribed equal weight and importance. Almost all the literature of the era would refute this, either implicitly or explicitly.

Of course, cultural attitudes of domination may be found in European art and literature about other parts of the world which were colonized or dominated by the Western powers. It would be interesting to compare these Orientalist paintings with a similar genre which takes, for instance, India or China as its subject. While it is likely that many common features would be found, it does seem that Europe's view of the Middle East contains, as Said suggests, certain special features: first and foremost a view of Islam which is not comparable to European perceptions of Hinduism or Buddhism. Geographical proximity has left a long history of well-remembered conflict which has helped to create both a sense of threat and a need to contain it.

This exhibition and others like it, and a spate of books on Orientalist painting, suggest that there has been a revival of interest in the genre. This has been encouraged by commercial art dealers and galleries which are now finding that this and other kinds of 19th century "nostalgia" bring good returns. Despite the critical work of Said and others after him, the present political climate, in the US even more than in Europe, does not encourage serious analysis of political events and trends in the Middle East, particularly as they relate to the nature of Islam and Arab culture. Thus paintings which evoke violence and threat can still be easily accepted. At the same time, many viewers are able to look at paintings of market scenes and monuments as an extension of photographs—"like" something seen on holidays and tours in the region.

This nostalgia is not restricted to Europeans. There is an increasing interest in 19th century Orientalist painting among Arabs themselves, particularly those who can afford to purchase art. Like old photographs, these paintings are seen, sometimes quite uncritically, as a representation of life in the Arab world "as it used to be." In the absence of other types of figurative visual imagery of the past, Orientalist paintings serve as a measure of change, or an evocation of a lost era. Thus what was appropriated by Europe can be re-appropriated and is in danger of becoming part of national memory and heritage. ■

### **Palestinians Over the Green Line.**

Edited by Alexander Schölch. London: Ithaca Press, 1983.

This collection of essays on "the relations of Palestinians on both sides of the 1949 Armistice Line since 1967," the two groups of Palestinians remaining inside Palestine, promises a wider framework of analysis than the many existing separate studies of the two groups already published. The joint research team from the universities of Essen and Birzeit was able to undertake this project in a way that overcame both some of the weaknesses of foreign

<sup>\*</sup> See the review of *Orientalism* by Basim Musalam in *MERIP Reports* no. 79 (July-August 1979), p. 25.

researchers and the difficulties of local scholars, such as lack of access to resources, problems of publication and restrictions on movement. The core of the project is contained in two of the studies analyzing an attitudinal survey conducted by the research team of sample groups of elites and workers on both sides of the green line. Emile Saliyyeh of Birzeit University and Ibrahim Dakkak of the Arab Thought Forum (Jerusalem) do a good job of analyzing the data, but this was gathered from a fairly small sample (due partly to the widespread unrest and repression in the spring of 1982). Thus it yields few conclusive or surprising results. The starting point of the analysis—that the June 1967 war led to a re-emergence of Palestinian identity in both groups—is by now indisputable. The question of whether this re-emergence has led or will lead to a re-linking of these two segments of Palestinian society remains unanswered. Dakkak concludes in his survey of attitudes of Palestinian wage-earners that “the developing interdependence [of the two groups] reveals, on a material basis, that it barely exists.” Dakkak aptly suggests that the term “identification” rather than “interdependence” best describes the current relation. Emile Saliyyeh points out some interesting divergences in the opinions of the two groups. One is that “only a small percentage” of Palestinians in Israel expect to join a future Palestinian state, while the majority of West Bank respondents assert that Palestinians in Israel would join such a state.

Survey techniques, which necessarily require narrow formulations, may not be the most appropriate method for approaching the problem. A focus on current attitudes as a main indicator of the nature of the relationship between the two groups is quite restrictive. A broader approach, but more ambitious and time-consuming, would include the historical aspect, with a deeper look at the intersecting effects of the Jordanian and Israeli occupation experience of the two groups.

The most original contribution is Ibrahim Dakkak's “Back to Square One.” This is an insider's look at the emergence of the Palestine Patriotic Front (also known as the Palestine National Front) in the West Bank in 1973. Its demise in 1977 was partly due, as Dakkak explains, to PLO policy and to the subsequent emergence of other formations such as the National Guidance Committee—II. Dakkak convincingly poses the struggle for leadership of Palestinians in the occupied territories in terms of conflict between progressive (the PPF) and conservative forces (pro-Jordanian for the most part). His account of the gradual ascendancy of the conservatives (trailing behind the shift in the PLO as a whole) is particularly illuminating at the present juncture.

In 1975, Dakkak writes, “one of the CC [the Central Council of the PLO] members conveyed a message from Beirut in 1975 requesting that the PPF limit its activities to the signing of memoranda in support of the PLO policies and against anti-PLO activities. The message suggested that PPF literature be prepared ‘outside’ and smuggled to the ‘inside’ for distribution.” What lies behind this, in Dakkak's opinion, is the view of rightwingers in the PLO that the Front was made up of “leftists and controlled by communists.” In fact, West Bank communists did play a substantial role in the PPF, and the refusal to include them

in the Palestine National Council continues to sour the West Bank political scene even today. The demise of the PPF and an upsurge in Jordanian influence in the occupied territories in 1977 came after the PLO instituted first secret contact and then direct negotiations with the monarchy. Dakkak's analysis of this period is subtle—he gently mocks the “yearning” political groupings now display for the good old days of the PPF—and quite helpful in understanding the current political dynamics in the occupied territories.

In other offerings, Reinhard Weimer proffers an interesting if not entirely convincing thesis that economic, rather than ideological or security considerations, dictated Zionist policy towards Palestinians in Israel in the 1948-1966 period. Geographer Kamal Abdul Fattah's meticulous list of destroyed Arab villages inside the 1948 borders is a valuable contribution. Alexander Flores looks at political influences across the green line, principally through newspapers, journals and leaflets, and notes that the “contacts are not so numerous or systematic as one would expect at first glance.” ■

—Penny Johnson

### Syria: Modern State in an Ancient Land

By John F. Devlin. Boulder: Westview Press, 1983. 140 pages. \$16.50.

### The Ba'ath and Syria 1947-1982

By Robert Olson. Princeton: The Kingston Press, 1982. 235 pages.

### The Islamic Struggle in Syria

By Dr. Umar F. Abd-Allah. Berkeley: Mizan Press, 1983. 300 pages. \$24.95.

John Devlin's is much the best of these books in terms of its perceptions, its accuracy and its style. The author of *The Ba'ath Party* (1976) is no newcomer to Syria. He was a Middle East analyst for the CIA, although he carefully avoids mention of CIA activities in Syria, especially around the time of the first military coup in 1949. Nevertheless, this is the best available short introduction to the history of twentieth century Syria.

Because he does not consider the residue of Ottoman influence in the interwar period, Devlin's account of Syria under French Mandate is quite unconventional. He does convey that power in Syria has historically been an expression of urban processes: the Syrian peasantry has borne the weight of centuries of oppression, first by ruthless tax collectors and eventually by an even more rapacious urban-absentee landowning class.

Devlin gets better as he approaches Syria under the Ba'ath. His clear account of Syrian domestic political life through the breakup of the UAR synthesizes his own work and that of Patrick Seale. He then examines the way the political system has worked since the Ba'ath seized power in 1963. Devlin provides a lucid, concise explanation of the structure of the Ba'ath Party apparatus, and the influence of government at the national and provincial levels. He pinpoints the military and security services and, in



particular, an "ideological" officer corps penetrated by Alawis as the most important but least understood element in the "governmental triad." Within this context, he is able to sift through the confusion surrounding Hafiz al-Asad's consolidation of power by taking control of the party apparatus, stripping it of much of its ideological content, and then broadening the political process and hence his personal base. Devlin correctly points to domestic factors as the source of the regime's unpopularity: "bureaucratic flabbiness," growing corruption, and heightened tensions between the rural-based, Alawi-dominated ruling elite and a Sunni majority in the towns, deprived of its traditional access to government and power (chapter 6).

By contrast, Devlin's analysis of the Syrian economy and its problems is neither illuminating nor complete. He does not view Asad's "pragmatism" as the product of an ideological struggle within the Syrian ruling elite and its allied classes, a struggle compounded by the growing pressures of international capital seeking to reshape the Syrian economy to accommodate its demands and interests. Devlin describes with remarkable precision the major shifts in the course of modern Syrian history, but he rarely probes below the surface of that history to examine the complex interaction of forces giving it movement.

Robert Olson's book is an expanded version of his two-part article in *Oriente Moderno* (1978/79). It spans the entire history of the Ba'th Party, but concentrates on the period after 1966, and especially Hafiz al-Asad's regime. The most glaring weakness is Olson's failure to place his study in an identifiable explanatory framework. He begins abruptly with a somewhat stale analysis of Ba'thist ideology, abstracting it from the social context in which it emerged.\* The reader must wait until the final chapter for a clear statement of Olson's perspective: Asad's minority Alawi regime took to "modernization" more readily than the Sunni urban elites, in particular the early Ba'thist leadership; while some political development did accompany socioeconomic modernization, an authoritarian system of rule eventually won the day. There is not much new here.

Olson does emphasize that the Alawi ascendancy was linked to the fortunes of other economically and politically disenfranchised rural communities. Olson's major contribution is his synthesis of the recently published research in English of van Dam, Hinnebusch, Drysdale, and others on the political economy of Syria in the 1960s and 1970s.\*\* Based on their work, he concludes that:

- The Ba'thist seizure of power in 1963 was not simply a military coup, but had a pronounced class dimension. The officers were of petty-bourgeois and rural origins and many of these same officers helped to form the neo-Ba'th which ousted the original urban-based leadership of the Party in 1966.
- The main thrust of neo-Ba'thist rural policy was to destroy the social and political power base of the old landowning classes by land redistribution, and to but-

tress the positions of small and middle-level peasants. Since the mid-1970s, there seems to have been a reversal of this trend.

- Although the Ba'th Party has a strong minority component, especially in its military wing and Regional Command, Alawi leaders did not necessarily favor members of their own sect when it came to political advancement or the distribution of goods and services before the mid-1970s. In the first five years of his regime (1970-75), Asad actually broadened his base of support, mainly among the Sunnis of Damascus (though not in Aleppo and Hama, two major seats of opposition).
- The growth after 1975 of an urban-based "Islamic opposition" composed of middle-income Sunnis, while posing a serious challenge to Asad's regime, may not achieve its aim of toppling that regime. It appears less patriotic than the Ba'th, minorities fear a government based on Islamic principles, and the Muslim Brotherhood has not been able to build a firm base in the countryside or the military.

Apart from the absence of a framework, Olson's book contains other weaknesses. His contention that the regime's role in the Lebanese civil war forced Asad to turn more and more to Alawis in order to survive is highly debatable. One would do better to look, as Devlin does, at a number of domestic pressures in the mid-1970s that contributed to a decline in the regime's popularity and effectiveness. Another questionable assertion is Olson's claim that Aleppo was "traditionally" a more "Islamic" city than Damascus (p. 182). Aleppo was less homogeneous than Damascus and it had a significantly larger minority component, giving it a "Levantine" coloration (in Albert Hourani's classic definition of the term), but Damascus was a more important seat of Muslim religious learning, more revered in Islam, and the major gathering point for Muslims from the east and north making the annual pilgrimage to the holy cities. Finally, Olson's study is the inaugural volume of a new publishing venture. Unfortunately, the text is marred by a number of printing and orthographic errors which easily could have been avoided.

Umar Abd-Allah aims to present to a Western audience the Syrian Muslim Brotherhood's reasons for wanting to topple the regime of Hafiz al-Asad, and to criticize the unholy alliance between the Islamic Republic of Iran—"the only state to have emerged in recent times from a revolutionary Islamic struggle"—and the Asad regime—a "state engaged in the brutal suppression of a similar struggle."

Despite Abd-Allah's largely uncritical account of Muslim Brotherhood ideology and politics, his book is of some value. His reconstruction of the Brotherhood's early history leans heavily on Johannes Reissner's groundbreaking but not readily accessible *Ideologie und Politik der Muslimbrüder Syriens* (1980), and the critical reflections on this history by several unnamed members of the Syrian Brotherhood whom Abd-Allah has consulted. He provides biographical sketches of the Brotherhood's leading personalities, charts the development of the Islamic Front (of which the Brotherhood is the major component) after the mid-1970s, and examines, in somewhat excessive detail, its ideology and program. Finally, he provides as an appendix a translation of the

\*Olson would have done well to consult Hanna Batatu's sharp analysis of the syncretic and contradictory aspects of Ba'thist thought in *The Old Social Classes and the Revolutionary Movements of Iraq* (1978), chapter 38.

\*\*Unfortunately Olson seems unaware of the equally important published research, mainly in French, of Longuenesse, Picard, Seurat, and Carré, some of which is collected in *La Syrie d'aujourd'hui*, ed. André Raymond (1981). He also fails to use Longuenesse on state and society, in *MERIP Reports*, No. 77.

Front's *Proclamation (Bayan)*, a useful document if only because it offers yet another vision (this one Sunni-inspired) of how a "revolutionary" Islamic state and society ought to behave.

Abd-Allah makes little effort to examine the structural weaknesses of the Syrian Muslim Brotherhood—its failure to penetrate the countryside and army, and its unattractiveness to Syria's various minorities. He is long on

ideological abstraction and programmatic exegesis and short on social analysis, despite some efforts to emphasize the urban base of the Brotherhood in Syria, in contrast to the rural foundations of the Brotherhood in Egypt. For this, one must turn to Hanna Batatu's "Syria's Muslim Brethren," (*MERIP Reports* No. 110) and, if possible, to Reissner. ■

## Occupied Palestine

16 mm color. 88 minutes. Produced and directed by David Koff. Edited by Tom Scott Robson. Photography by Stephen Lighthill, Neil Gibson, Martin Minns. Sound by Jerry Blumenthal, Sara Ellis. Cinema Six Productions, 1981. Occupied Palestine is available on film and videotape for educational and non-commercial use. Write the Bellweather Group, 15910 Ventura Blvd., Suite 625, Encino CA 91436.

David Koff and his team have made a complex, sensitive and brutally authentic movie. "Occupied Palestine" delivers its message with unnerving sharpness and accuracy. For these very reasons it may strike those who are not intimately familiar with the lives and struggles of Palestinians under Israeli domination—both citizens of Israel and those living under manifest military occupation—as exaggerated and overblown.

"Occupied Palestine" is one of the rare occasions when Palestinian Arabs have been provided with a forum and medium to speak for themselves, in terms of their own perceptions. For this reason alone, the film is an extremely valuable educational experience. It is—to the extent that this is possible in any unspontaneous medium—an unmediated encounter with what Palestinians think and experience as a result of their domination by Israel. Because the American public has generally been insulated from such direct contact with Palestinians and their perceptions about their experiences, many may find the film incredible. The simple realities of what it means to live under and to resist occupation have never been so clearly presented to a Western audience.

It is indeed quite fantastic to see Israeli soldiers on the West Bank lobbing tear gas and shooting at young demonstrators whose sole offense appears to be that they are waving a Palestinian flag. But this is a common occurrence in the occupied territories, where even the display of the colors red, black and green can be considered a crime. The very moving set of sequences in which these demonstrations occur grasps powerfully the essence of the contradiction between Zionism and Palestinian nationalism. The simple assertion that there is a Palestinian people who have a flag which represents their national identity and aspirations is anathema to the Zionist world outlook in both its Labor and Revisionist versions.

One of the film's great strengths is the way in which it manages to convey the essential unity of the Palestinian experience of Zionist colonization. There has not been, from the Palestinian point of view, a dramatic difference



between falling under Israeli rule in 1948 and undergoing the same experience in 1967. A great deal, of course, changed inside Israel during those years. The Labor ideals of Zionism, socialism and brotherhood of nations became increasingly less relevant for the reality of a settler colonial society. For Palestinians, those ideals were always a veil of

hypocrisy shrouding expropriation and oppression.

The film lets Israelis as well as Palestinians speak for themselves. Matityahu Drobles, head of the World Zionist Organization's settlement division and Rana'an Weitz of the Jewish Agency's rural settlement department talk unambiguously about their strategies for turning Palestine into *eretz Israel*. In one telling juxtaposition, Drobles tells us it costs about \$50,000 to settle an Israeli family in "Judea and Samaria." The next scene is a gala American fundraising event, where the master of ceremonies is bidding for contributions: "\$25,000! Thank you very much. ... \$18,000—Joe, are you here! Fabulous increase, thank you very much ... \$18,000! Will you please stand up. I want everybody to see you."

The film gives a vivid picture of the uprisings on the West Bank in the late 1970s, which of course did not succeed in dislodging the occupation. The film does not suggest an explanation for this failure, or how it might be overcome, but then the Palestinian national movement itself has not yet addressed this question. This should not

lead anyone to believe that the Palestinians are about to concede defeat and that Israel is on the verge of an unchallenged annexation of the West Bank and the Gaza Strip. A people which has resisted every attempt at obliteration of its national existence for so long is unlikely to accept it at this late date.

It is this impressive steadfastness that the film conveys above all else, against the pervasiveness and sheer weight of the machinery of occupation and confiscation. Koff's footage is sharp and revealing. The editing is crisp and the pace of the film does not flag. One minor criticism is that Koff does not always identify his very competent on-screen narrators, such as Ibrahim Matar and Uri Davis, or the other Palestinians and Israelis who speak on camera. It is reasonably clear what these individuals represent—the Gush settler, for instance, or the Palestinian prisoner—but it is an unnecessary distraction not to know whom we are seeing and hearing. Nevertheless, this film deserves a wide audience, for it is without a doubt the best film yet on the question of Palestine. ■

—Joel Beinin

## Forum

### To the Editors:

Christopher Hitchens' article "Uncorking the Genie: the Cyprus Question and Turkey's Military Rule" (*MERIP Reports*, March/April 1984) must be commended for approaching the complex issue of Cyprus from the vantage point of regional politics, rather than the more usual and not very enlightening arguments involving US imperialism or ethnic/religious differences. However, although his analysis is interesting and his paradigm plausible, the fact is that they quite simply do not apply. By looking at Turkish politics entirely through the prism of Cyprus, he has set up a model that appears to be supported more by aesthetics than hard facts.

First, Mr. Hitchens maintains that the invasion of Cyprus was a catalyst for the coup of 1980, insofar as it relegitimized the army that had been discredited after the 1971 coup. Yet, as explained in Ahmet Kemal's article in the same issue, "Military Rule and the Future of Democracy in Turkey," the place the army holds in Turkish society has never been seriously challenged. While the 1971-1973 period did end on a sour note for the military, and while such officers as Faruk Gurler and Faik Turun were indeed humiliated when they tried to get themselves elected to various offices, the army as an institution was at no time truly discredited. Even a cursory survey of the Turkish press during the 1970s will show that what led to the widespread acceptance of the 1980 coup was not the invasion but the period of political and economic chaos that reigned from the mid-1970s onward; Cyprus was hardly ever mentioned.

Second, in support of his claim that Cyprus "uncorked the genie" of military intervention, Mr. Hitchens points out that the Turkish liaison officer in Cyprus used to be Turgut Sunalp, now the leader of the junta-anointed Nationalist Democracy Party, and that the commander of the Turkish forces in 1974, Nurettin (not Necmettin) Ersin, later became a member of the 1980 junta. Yet, insofar as the chain of command has always been maintained during Turkish military takeovers, it is hardly surprising that those individual officers who "distinguished" themselves in Cyprus should have risen in ranks and are now heading the repressive regime in Ankara. That says nothing about causality, and indeed Mr. Hitchens' anecdote about the decision to invade being made "upstairs" rather than in parliament suggests that the generals were sufficiently powerful before the invasion.

Third, Mr. Hitchens makes much of "ironies" in these developments: Bulent Ecevit was imprisoned by "the very generals he had uncaged," and Deniz Baykal is "today under arrest at the orders of these same generals." But it is preposterous to claim that these men "uncaged" the generals; the military were never caged, not before 1974, and not at any other time. To say that "Turkey is now suffering the consequences of allowing Cyprus to help incubate an ambitious and chauvinistic military caste," or that "it was Cyprus which restored the military to a point where it could pose, once again, as a champion of Turkey and the nation" is to totally ignore Turkish history.

Fourth, Mr. Hitchens states that "Ecevit became the victim of the forces he had set in motion ... he was replaced within a few months by a coalition of the rightist parties," implying that he was somehow swept away by the rightist forces awakened by his own decision to invade Cyprus. But rightist forces did not need Cyprus to be set in motion. They have been rampant since the foundation of the republic, and with the qualified exception of the 1960 coup, the military has always been allied to them. Ecevit resigned in the wake of the invasion, a move prompted by opportunism and miscalculation, not by a surge of right-wing power.

All this is not to imply that Cyprus has had no effect at all on the course of recent Turkish history. For instance, the invasion and the upkeep of a significant military presence on the island, as well as the government-sponsored efforts to rebuild the devastated economy of northern Cyprus, have drained Turkey of precious resources, no doubt contributing to the economic collapse of the late 1970s. The political fallout of the invasion, however, has been much more limited than suggested by Mr. Hitchens. He should consider re-examining the theses in this chapter prior to the publication of his book, in a manner less colored by his Cyprus-centered outlook.

Memiş Aylak  
New York City



## Publications Received

- M.S. El-Azhary, ed., *The Iran-Iraq War* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1984). \$22.50.
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## FOOTNOTES

<sup>1</sup> Washington Post, January 24, 1980.

<sup>2</sup> United States Central Command, Department of Defense Fact Sheet, n.d. but marked current as of March 1983.

<sup>3</sup> This report, in *The Middle East* (July 1984), also cites a "reliable government source" that "Pakistan now has some 30,000 troops and advisers in the Gulf and Saudi Arabia" attached to the Gulf Cooperation Council which "could act as auxiliaries for the American rapid deployment force."

<sup>4</sup> Christian Science Monitor, March 1, 1984.

<sup>5</sup> Hearings Before the Committee on Armed Services, Department of Defense Authorization for Appropriations for Fiscal Year 1983, Part 3—Sea Power and Force Projection, March 5, 8, 12, 15-16, 18-19, and 22-23, 1982, p. 3729.

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